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RIVEREAST
News Bulletin

Serving Amston, Andover, Cobalt, Colchester, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough, Middle Haddam and Portland

Volume 47, Number 39 | Published by The Glastonbury Citizen | November 13, 2026

Taking the Plunge for a Great Cause in Belltown

By Anne Lilburn

East Hampton's 17th annual Turkey Plunge took place on Sunday, with 130 people heading into the waters of Lake Pocotopaug on a warm-but-breezy November morning.

Plungers raised $25,764 for the East Hampton Food and Fuel Bank this year, and Liberty Bank has promised to match 25% of funds raised, bringing that total to over $32,000. Additional contributions in the form of donated food added to the overall donation.

The event was once again co-managed by East Hampton Rotary and the East Hampton High School Interact Club. Fifty-four East Hampton High School students and six teachers took the plunge this year, representing a variety of clubs, from the Interact Club to DECA to the French Club.

EHHS teacher and Interact Club Advisor Kristen Keska, who spearheaded the event planning, said she was proud of the students who showed up for the plunge. Her Interact students all brought stuffed animals, with some dressed in costumes and others in pajamas. Keska, they said, had told them to bring the biggest stuffies they had, and for some students, like juniors (and first-time plungers) Charlotte Daniels and Leah Murphy, that meant bringing teddy bears dressed in pajamas that were almost as big as they were.

As usual, the event had a festive atmosphere, with students and community members alike donning costumes. DECA club students wore ties, and Brooke Bellemare, a sophomore who was there with both DECA and Interact, paired her tie with a giant inflatable Santa costume. This was her third year doing the plunge, she said, and last year she dressed as an inflatable snowman. For her senior year, she said she plans on going as an inflatable turkey.

She said she looks forward to the event each year, despite the chill.



Lila Ristau, Tom Kabara, Kate Kabara, June Ristau, Stacie Ristau and Aris Ristau, a.k.a. "The Gobbles," won Most Spirited Team at the 17th annual Turkey Plunge in East Hampton last weekend. See more photos on page 30.

"Last year I was the longest one in there," she said.

Her parents, who were not plunging, said they were proud of their daughter, not just for running into a lake in November, but for all her community outreach work with the Interact Club. Her mother, Rebecca, said that Brooke had contributed 50 service hours this year.

Freshmen Taylor Karabetsos and Evelyn Fielding were dressed as mimes and said they were there representing both Interact and the French Club.

Fielding said she wasn't excited about the actual plunge so much. She said she had done it a couple years ago with her mom, but hadn't wanted to go back until now.

"I feel like it's gonna sting," she said.

Over by the water, not long before the event began, Sophomore Joaquin Moren was checking the water, which he deemed "better than other years." Moren was there with DECA Club and said that this was his first year going in the water, but not his first year attending the event. He said he was not looking forward to it, but said he was going to do it anyways, because it was worth it for the cause.

It wasn't only high school students at the event. Dressed in witch hats and carrying brooms, Deanna Rhodes, from Marlborough, Jasmine Barss, from Gales Ferry, and Alie Nyland, from Norwich, were dancing before they got in the water. They said they were part of a dance group called "Brooms, Friends and Fun" that performs "The International Witch Dance" and noted that they raised around $175 for the food bank.

Rhodes said she wasn't worried about being too cold, and lifted her skirt off her ankles to show her full outfit.

"I've got my pantaloons on so I'll be good to go," she said.

Just prior to the actual plunge, Keska handed out awards, and the three witch dancers took home a prize for the Most Spirited Plungers.

See Taking a Plunge, page 24

School Funding Fight Grows in Andover

By Toriana Williams

The battle over who controls Andover Elementary School funding, and how taxpayers' money should be managed, continued to fester at Monday's meeting of the Andover Board of Selectmen.

At the Nov. 9 meeting, selectmen voted to approve two months of funding for Andover Elementary School (AES) and approved a plan to move the school's regular operating expenses into a town bank account beginning Jan. 1, 2027.

The meeting featured several disagreements between town officials and school leaders – and even a threat of possible legal action by the superintendent of schools.

For several months, the school board and town officials have been navigating a dispute concerning money that was being held in school accounts and how those funds are distributed.

In September, First Selectman Jeff Maguire, a Democrat, proposed that, instead of providing one-tenth of the annual amount roughly each month, the school board would receive 1/52 of the annual appropriations each week.

If the school needs more funds beyond that weekly amount, it would come before the Board of Selectmen and explain why the additional funding is needed.

The conflict has only grown since then, as Maguire proposed moving the school's allocated budget into a town bank account to help accrue interest on behalf of taxpayers.

During public comment on Monday, Board of Education Chair Caitlin Greenhouse reminded selectmen about a meeting held in late October with state officials and lawyers for both the town and the Board of Education.

She said the meeting made it clear that the town must provide money from the school's approved budget when the Board of Education asks for it. She also said the town was expected to provide the money within two business days of requesting it. However, that did not happen, according to Greenhouse.

The school had asked for one-tenth of its yearly budget well before Nov. 1, as it has done previously, Greenhouse said. Instead of receiving the full amount, the school received only part of the money.

Greenhouse said the amount left in the school's bank account was too low to comfortably cover bills and payroll.

"It's abysmal," she said of the school's cash balance. "We shouldn't be having to fight with the town to get money that's in our allocated budget."

She said she wanted the town and school boards to work together rather than fight over money that had already been approved.

See School Funding Fight, page 28

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AHM News & Notes

AHM Youth & Family Services has announced the following pieces of news. For more information, call 860-228-9488 or visit ahmyouth.org.

Immediate Daytime Openings Available: AHM Clinical Services has immediate openings available during the day for individual and/or family therapy for children, adolescents, and young adults up to age 26 to address social, emotional and/or behavioral issues. Call for an appointment. Most major insurances are accepted as a qualified method of payment, and there is a scholarship available for financial assistance if needed. For more information, visit ahmyouth.org/programs-services/clinical-services.

Giving Tuesday: Tuesday, Dec. 1. This is a day where people all over the world come together to support their favorite nonprofits. AHM's goal is to raise $10,000 to support youth and family mental health through its outpatient clinical program, student support services at all schools in the towns it serves, as well as outreach through its HERE 4 YOU mental health initiative.

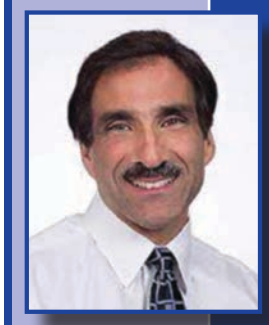
Here 4 You Podcast: Three new episodes of AHM's podcast have been released. This is a show that provides viewers with information and support on a variety of health and wellness topics. The podcast's newest episodes include "Transitioning Your Child Back to School," "What Do Vape Devices Look Like," and "Mobile Crisis Support for Youth in CT." Tune in on Spotify and YouTube.

Fall Programs Open: Registration is open for AHM's fall programs. There are many activities lined up for all ages, including theater, macrame, messy hands, and more. Visit ahmyouth.org to view the programs and sign up.

George M. Mantikas, DMD

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Girl Scouts Holiday Craft Fair

The RHAM Girl Scouts are busy working on their unique, handmade items that will be available for purchase at the 32nd annual Holiday Craft Fair, scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 5, from 9 a.m.-noon, in the Marlborough Elementary School community room.

The fair is open to the public and has no admission fee. All items are priced at $10 or under, and each purchase comes with free gift wrapping.

The craft fair also allows children to independently shop for gifts for their favorite people and pets. Young shoppers can bring a list of who to buy for and some money, and older Girl Scouts will be available to assist them with gift selections and financial transactions. Family members can watch from afar or relax in the cafeteria while their children pick out the perfect gifts.

There will also be a bake sale in the cafeteria with a selection of baked items and free drinks for shoppers to enjoy. This year, the Girl Scouts will also collect non-perishable donations for the Hebron and Marlborough food banks.

All craft fair proceeds go directly to RHAM Girl Scout troops for troop activities and community service projects.

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RE10-9-26

Rivereast Standout Athletes of the Week (Double Dose)

By Josh Howard

Edie Ranta - RHAM High School (Cross-Country): Ranta placed second overall at the Class M state championships, placing behind only Mercy's Cora Wasiolek for the top spot at Wickham Park on Oct. 31. Her time of 19:12.5 earned the second-best time in program history in a championship race. Ranta, a sophomore, then placed 11th overall at the State Open, which was held at the same venue in Manchester on Nov. 5. The Raptors placed sixth overall at the Class M meet, thanks to the efforts of Ranta and senior Laura Pineda (17th overall), who each qualified for the State Open. Ranta will now compete in the New England Cross-Country Championship race in Belfast, Maine this Saturday, Nov. 14.

Holden Hines, Nolan O'Connor and Alex Brown - East Hampton/Portland/Xavier (Cross-Country): Hines, O'Connor, and Brown helped Xavier High School win both a Class MM State Championship and State Open over a seven-day span. Hines, a junior from East Hampton, placed fourth overall at both races. O'Connor, a junior from Portland, placed fifth in Class MM and 15th at the State Open. Brown, a junior from Portland, placed 13th at Class MM and 37th at the State Open. It was the first time since 2018 that the Falcons won both class and state titles.

Maddy Ives - Bacon Academy (Soccer): Ives scored the decisive goal as the Bobcats eliminated Northwestern, 1-0, in the first round of the Class M state tournament. Ives, a senior captain, scored the goal on a header following a perfectly-placed corner kick from Violet Melino. Along with her tourney heroics, Ives was also honored as All-Eastern Connecticut Conference (ECC) first-team. She was one of four All-ECC first-team selections, joining Quinn Guntulis, Michaela Smith, and Ava Galante on the elite squad.

Jasmine Martin - East Hampton (Volleyball): Martin was named All-Shoreline Conference (SLC) first-team as the Bellringers won nine regular season games and another in the conference tourney, a four-set victory over Valley Regional in the SLC quarterfinals. Martin, a junior, leads the team in kills and aces this season, along with being one of the team leaders in blocks and digs. It marked the second consecutive year that Martin earned all-conference, being selected All-SLC second-team in 2025.

Josh Clark - Portland Middle School (Cross-Country): Clark placed 13th overall – first in the small school division – at the 33rd Annual CT Middle School XC Championships at Wickham Park on Nov. 7. Clark, an eighth grader, finished the course in 13:50.8 to take home the top spot in the division and ahead of 417 other competitions in the state-wide meet. Clark's efforts helped the team placed third overall in the division.

Derek Barone - RHAM High School (Soccer): Barone had an assist in regulation and then netted the game-winning penalty kick as the Raptors outlasted Jonathan Law in the first round of the Class M state tourney on Nov. 7. Barone, a senior, set up Cameron Fitzgibbons in regulation as the game ended 1-1 at the end of regulation before Barone netted his decisive penalty kick and goalie Will Krajewski made a pair of saves during the extra session.



RHAM High School girls cross-country paced sixth overall at the Class M state championship behind the lead of sophomore Edie Ranta, who finished second overall as an individual.

Aidan Curry - Portland High School (Soccer): Curry, a senior captain, was selected All-Shoreline Conference (SLC) first-team after helping the Highlanders finish the regular season 7-6-3 and earn a spot in the state tournament. Curry was one of three all-conference players on the roster this season as sophomore Tyler Fournier was selected All-SLC second-team and senior captain Aiden Maselek was named All-SLC honorable mention.

Zach Chiarella - Bacon Academy (Soccer): Chiarella scored a pair of goals and dished out two assists as the Bobcats beat Bullard Havens Tech, 5-1, in the first round of the Class M state tournament on Nov. 6. Chiarella, a senior, was previously selected as the Eastern Connecticut Conference (ECC) tournament's Most Outstanding Player after Bacon Academy defeated NFA 1-0 in the championship. He had a goal and an assist in the quarterfinals, and assisted the game-winner in the championship match.

To nominate an athlete as a Standout of the Week, email joshhowardsports@gmail.com. Please include as many details about the athlete or performance as possible.

VITA Seeks Volunteers

The Middlesex VITA Coalition helps thousands of area residents file their taxes at no cost. As part of the IRS-sponsored Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, the coalition is seeking volunteers to help continue the mission.

Middlesex VITA specializes in maximizing tax credits for families and individuals with incomes under $70,000. No prior tax preparation experience is required, as training is provided. You will collaboratively prepare client returns, ensuring you're never working alone.

Middlesex County includes the *Rivereast* towns of Portland and East Hampton.

Training begins in early January. If interested in volunteering, email MiddlesexCT.Vita@gmail.com, or connect on Facebook at "Middlesex CT VITA."

Christmas Fair in Bolton

St. Maurice Church, located at 32 Hebron Road in Bolton, will hold its 55th annual Christmas Fair – "Sleigh Bells Ring" – on Saturday, Nov. 21, from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

This event features a Country Store filled with homemade jams, muffin and cookie mixes, decorated wreaths and Christmas trees, and handcrafted stocking stuffers. There will be fresh holiday evergreen baskets, as well as "Take-A-Chance" raffle baskets with prizes, and a tag sale table.

Homemade apple pies and baked goods will be for sale. Many crafters will also be on site. Lunch will be served. The church is handicapped-accessible.

Tri-County American Legion Baseball

Registration is open for those interested in Tri-County American Legion baseball program's winter hitting league.

Deadline to register is Dec. 1, but space is limited to the first 40 paid registrants.

The six-week league is scheduled to run in two sessions (Wednesdays and Saturdays) beginning in early January. It is open to serious players who will be between the ages of 12-19 in 2027 – and who have a parent residing in Andover, Colchester, East Haddam, East Hampton, Hebron, Lebanon or Marlborough.

For more information and to register, go to www.tclegion.com or contact GM Len Lampugnale at Lampugnale@comcast.net or at 860-295-0437.

Tryouts for Tri-County's 2027 teams will begin in February. Registration for tryouts will open up by late November. Depending on interest, Tri-County can again form teams at all four levels of American Legion (19U, 17U, 15U and 13U), as well as teams to compete in Babe Ruth (13U-16U).

Food Drive for Amazing Grace Pantry

Cromwell Chiropractic Center is collecting donations throughout November to benefit Amazing Grace Food Pantry in Middletown and help local individuals and families in need during the holiday season.

The pantry is currently well stocked with canned vegetables and fruit. Items most needed include pasta, soup, cereal, rice, tomato sauce, canned meals, condiments, pancake mix and syrup, coffee, and tea.

Household necessities are also welcome, including toilet paper, dish soap, laundry detergent, shampoo, and deodorant.

Donations may be dropped off through Nov. 30 at: Cromwell Chiropractic Center, 28 Shunpike Road, Suite 4, Cromwell, CT 06416. Donation drop-off hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 7:45 a.m.-noon and 2:45–6:30 p.m.

The food drive is open to everyone in Cromwell, Middletown, Portland, Rocky Hill, and surrounding communities.

For more information, call 860-635-4455.

Holiday Craft Fair

The Ray of Light Farm in East Haddam will have its annual Holiday Craft Fair on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. All are invited.

Over 30 vendors will be present, selling a variety of crafted items. The show will be held in the indoor arena, rain or shine. In addition to crafts, there will be a bake sale, a wagon ride on the farm's woodland trail, and a visit by Santa. You can also feed the goats and meet all of the animals.

Ray of Light Farm is a nonprofit animal rescue and sanctuary that has been in East Haddam at 232 Town St. for over 20 years.

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From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

There's a program coming up in Colchester about one of my favorite pieces of local lore: the Great Colchester Molasses Shortage of 1705.

The program will take place at the Colchester History Museum, 24 Linwood Ave., on Sunday, Nov. 15, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. – and will feature samples of molasses desserts.

What is the Great Colchester Molasses Shortage, you ask?

According to the New England Historical Society, the weather in the fall of 1705 had been unusually cold in Colchester. In mid-October, a brutal cold snap lasted for three days. This was followed by some mild weather – but then a blast of even colder air moved in.

The Connecticut River froze, the historical society said, and a frigid wind blew. To make matters worse, a storm dumped three feet of snow on Colchester. This was particularly bad because, since the river froze so early, the settlers hadn't laid in winter provisions usually shipped from Norwich and New London.

At that point in time, Colchester then had only a handful of families, and the town was still very much in its infancy, having been founded just seven years before, in 1698. In fact, in 1705 the town streets hadn't even been laid out yet; that wouldn't happen until the following year.

So, Colchester relied on boats to deliver supplies along a tributary of the Connecticut River, 10 miles away.

Now, in early New England, there were often public days of fasting or thanksgiving in response to political or natural events. They could happen several times a year, and they were often local affairs, according to the New England Historical Society. It just so happened that, in 1705, Nov. 4 had been proclaimed a day of Thanksgiving. But as the day approached, Colchester had almost no molasses – and nothing could be delivered as the river was frozen.

Why was this such a big deal?

According to the historical society, New England colonists used molasses imported from the West Indies because they didn't cost as much as sugar. Colonists used molasses in baked beans, brown bread – and, importantly, pumpkin pie.

The English colonists had learned from Native Americans about the pumpkin, called pompion, and adapted it to their own cuisine. The pumpkin pie came to symbolize the New World bounty celebrated by Thanksgiving, the historical society said. By 1705, pumpkin pie had been a well-established dessert for half a century.

In fact, pumpkins played such an important role in any feast that some 17th-century Puritan ministers denounced them from the pulpit, according to the historical society. They preached that Thanksgivings should be renamed 'St. Pompion's Day' because of the gluttony they inspired.

But without molasses, Colchester residents couldn't make pumpkin pie, the society said – nor could they have baked beans, molasses cake or sweetener for rum.

The bottom line simply thus: No molasses, no Thanksgiving.

So, Colchester's town fathers agreed in 1705 to postpone Thanksgiving by a week, because they couldn't hold it "with convenience" on Nov. 4.

According to the historical society, the tale of the Great Colchester Molasses Shortage quickly became a food legend. In fact, more than two centuries later, Rose Mills Powers wrote a poem about it for the July 1908 edition of "Good Housekeeping" magazine. It's pretty delightful.

Colchester housewives are glum and sad—
Colchester housewives who should be glad—
Baking and brewing for Thanksgiving day.
What is the trouble up Colchester way?

Editor's Desk continued on page 7

Bulletin Board

Ah, autumn in New England.

It has been a memorable fall this year. The maples were especially red; the birches almost chromatic in their yellowness; and the sugar maples a wonderful shade of orange. You would have to possess a heart of stone to be unmoved by this glorious display in blessed New England.

And now, of course, it's November.

And as all those splendidly colored leaves fall trembling to earth to pile up in unsightly rotting heaps on my yard, killing what passes for grass and stubbornly refusing to blow over onto my neighbors' property, my thoughts invariably turn to our Creator.

I am not happy with this transition.

Why on earth couldn't He/She have designed trees so that the leaves change color without falling? A tree that would let them stay attached to the branches without falling down and piling up and forcing me to spend endless hours raking the damn things up and trying to figure out what to do with them. Would that really have been so hard?

If I sound bitter, it's only because I have a lot of trees in my yard.

I'm also a little annoyed with myself. You see, I thought I had a cunning contingency plan in place that would allow me to avoid all this leaf nonsense.

I thought that having two sons would spare me the trouble of raking or blowing or otherwise disposing of leaves in the fall. I figured I'd guilt them into it. No problem. They'd clean up my leaves and I wouldn't bother them again until there was a foot of snow to be shoveled out of my driveway. It was genius. Or so I thought.

Then they grew up and moved away, leaving me with a yard full of rotting humus.

It's not fair.

There was a time when my only interest in leaves was whether they had been cultivated in Columbia or Panama. But those days are long behind me and now, as a balding, potbellied homeowner with diminishing testosterone and an aversion to yard work, I find myself feeling less than mellow about autumn's annual assault on my modest domain.

It was not supposed to turn out this way.

And yet, I really don't blame God. I don't think He/She expected it to turn out this way either.

It is my belief that God's intention (which remained in force during my own childhood) was to craft leaves so they provided an inspiring show of color in the fall. They would then flutter to the ground where God's creatures (us) could rake them into piles for joyous children to jump in and build forts and stuff down each other's backs. And finally, we would ceremoniously light the piles of leaves on fire along the side of the road, sending "burning leaf incense" wafting through the neighborhood for all to savor during this special time of year. It was practically a religious experience. Leaf smoke, apple cider and pumpkins.

And then the government got involved.

Some soulless bureaucrat decided that all that heavenly smoke was bad for people's health so they passed a law forbidding us to burn leaves. They'll allow you to smoke cigarettes or inhale all the marijuana smoke you want so long as you enrich the government by paying taxes on the stuff. That's just fine. But don't go burning the leaves in your yard because that's a health hazard.

And so, as I write this, all those beautiful multi-colored leaves continue to waft to earth, piling up in my yard by their countless thousands, refusing to do the decent thing and just blow away. Oh, for a book of matches. A simple book of matches.

Jim Hallas

Rivereast Hours of Operation

The offices of the *Rivereast News Bulletin* and *Glastonbury Citizen*, located at 87 Nutmeg Lane, Glastonbury, are open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The *Rivereast* can be reached any time via email at bulletin@glcitizen.com.



Champion Coyotes… **The Colchester Coyotes U12 soccer team took first place at the recent SoccerFest Tournament. Pictured are, back row, Ryan Griffin, Coach Adam Griffin, Jude Billiot, Camden Pariseau, Cole Pennella, Connor Parsons, Colton Carr, Nico Ingalla, Coach Rob Hlasyszyn and Coach Ashley Gaedt; front row, Bryan Poresky, Ryder Hlasyszyn, Porter Winters, Anthony Szewczyk and Max Dean. Not pictured are: Austin Wilinski, Landon Sheridan, Julian Norige, and coaches Bryan Poresky and Paul Norige.**

Reader Forum • Reader Forum • Reader Forum • Reader Forum • Reader Forum

Corrections

In the Oct. 30 story on the Marlborough Board of Education's budget shortfall, it was reported the shortfall was $236,512. That is incorrect. The correct amount is $136,512.

Also, a letter to the editor last week stated the Hazen Tree property has been acquired by a developer. This is incorrect, and the farm is in fact still open.

The *Rivereast* regrets the error.

It's Your Budget

To the Editor:

Before you know it, Marlborough Town Hall, our local Board of Education and RHAM will be working on their 2027-28 budgets. You need to get involved and stay involved. Please attend the budget workshops and public hearings this winter and into the spring.

If you can't attend in person, you can log in online or at least read the meeting minutes or watch the video recordings. I know these meetings can be boring, but it won't be boring when you check your tax bill next July 1st.

It's too late if you decide to complain about your taxes after the budget is approved in May. If you have any concerns, the time to say something is before the budget goes to referendum.

So, please get involved and stay involved.

Ken Hjulstrom – Marlborough

Note: *Hjulstrom is a member of the Marlborough Board of Finance, but said he is speaking as an individual.*

Thank You Poll Workers, Registrars

To the Editor:

On behalf of the Town of Portland, I would like to thank all of the poll workers who supported Portland's election on Nov. 3rd and the preceding two weeks of daily early voting. In addition to being at the polls on election day and during early voting, there is advanced set-up and breakdown work that is done behind the scenes. Thanks also to Assistant Town Clerk Elizabeth Morand for her assistance with the absentee ballot process. Additionally, I would like to thank the Portland Middle School building maintenance team, Portland Police, Public Works, the town technology team, and Skip Petras for their assistance with getting the polling place ready for voters.

Most importantly, I would like to thank the Portland registrars of voters, Pauline Neumann and Maureen O'Doherty for all they do day in and day out to prepare for and support our elections. It is with mixed emotions that I announce that after 25 years of faithful service to the Town of Portland, Pauline Neumann is retiring as a registrar of voters. We certainly wish her the best in her retirement, but know that she will be missed at the polls next year. Please join me in wishing her a happy retirement.

Thanks to everyone who voted. We look forward to seeing you at the polls in May for the budget referendum.

Michael Tierney
Portland Town Clerk

RIVEREAST
News Bulletin
Serving Amston, Andover, Cobalt, Colchester, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough, Middle Haddam and Portland

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Letter Writers: Letters must be 400 words or less, and must be submitted by **Tuesday** at noon. Email is preferred; send to bulletin@glcitizen.com. All letters must include the writer's town of residence and daytime contact phone number. Letters regarding national issues or national public figures will not be published. Anonymous letters will not be published. All letters are subject to editing for grammar, spelling and clarity, and are also subject to fact-checking. No bullying or name-calling will be tolerated. There is no guarantee that all letters will be published.

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Follow Eversource Rate Case

Hello Neighbors:

This past July Eversource initiated a rate case. A rate case determines how much revenue utilities can collect, their profit margins, how that money is allocated, etc.

You can follow the case and offer comments, if you wish. The Acadia Center has a primer on how to do both at acadiacenter.org. Follow that link and scroll down to a blog post titled, "Eversource's 2026 Rate Case: What's at Stake and How to Weigh In."

I thought the post did an excellent job of summarizing a highly technical, little understood process. It's a good place to start on a complex issue.

Regards,
Andy Bauer, Chair
Portland Clean Energy

With Respect & Gratitude

To the Editor:

On Nov. 3, my 90-year-old mother, Louise O'Donnell passed away peacefully at our home in Marlborough. There are many who helped through this difficult time. Respect and gratitude to each of them.

Troop K, CT State Police responded to my call. From dispatch to attending officers, all were kind, knowledgeable, respectful professionals. Thank you to Rob Hansen from Mulryan Funeral Home who returned my late-night calls and handled mom's transport and arrangements with professionalism and respect.

Love to Finn Larson, my son from another mother, for your abundance of help taking care of Louie and "Nana" and helping me take care of everything.

While I cared for Mom during her final days, Deputy Registrar of Voters Kimberly Allegretti stepped up and filled my position as registrar of voters during most of early voting. Kim is a bright light, adaptable, dedicated professional who serves with integrity. The election workers, both the seasoned staff and new additions are true rockstars who adapted to the last-minute schedule changes and preserved the integrity of the election process.

Selectman Louise Concodello is a gift to the town of Marlborough. She serves our town with dedication, integrity and knowledge. Thank you, Louise, for your kindness and support.

Much appreciation to The Marlborough RTC Members for your friendship, prayers and kindness. Your Bingo events brought mom much fun this past year. Gratitude to Steve Weir and Jason Guidone for sending prayers up for mom and our family.

My mom looked forward to visiting with the Public Works men at the "dump." She informed her friends and family about how neat the "dump" is and how helpful the men working there are. Thank you all.

Nella and the staff at Village Green Restaurant provided a child-friendly spot where Mom could bring Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren when they visited. Those meatballs were her favorite treat. Thank you for being there with hugs and tenderness when I needed a retreat from the business of death.

Finally, thank you to my coworkers at Town Hall who inquired about Mom while she prepared for her final journey and offered words of comfort.

With respect and gratitude,
Michele Anne Kacy – Marlborough

It Meant a Lot

To the Editor:

It was 6 p.m. last Friday, and we had a baby shower the next day, 25 people to feed and no sandwich platter. My daughters were hosting the shower at our home, and in the flurry of getting ready, we realized the order had never been placed. "I wish we'd caught this sooner," I told my husband. D'eliana's, my favorite deli, closed at six.

We headed out in the rain toward Costco to see what we could pull together. On the way, we passed D'eliana Public Market & Deli in East Hampton and saw that the lights were still on. "Pull in," my husband said. We could see they were wrapping up for the night, but I took a chance and knocked.

Lauren, the owner, came to the door and listened while I explained. "Let's see what we can do," she said. She called Chef George, and without hesitation, he said they'd have a platter ready for us at noon the next day.

And they did. They even helped us carry it out to the car. The sandwiches were fresh and delicious, and I loved the variety they put together for us. You can tell how much pride Lauren, George and their team take in the food they make and in taking care of their customers.

I've always preferred to shop locally when I can, and Friday night reminded me why. If you're planning a holiday gathering, I'd happily recommend giving D'eliana's a call.

Lauren, George, and everyone at D'eliana's, thank you for taking such good care of us. You were ready to call it a night, and you took the time to help us anyway. It meant a lot to our family.

Website: https://delianact.com/

Alexis Crean – East Hampton

Dementia Talks No. 78

To the Editor:

The moment that Mom walked up to the dining room table and said "that is my family," my heart melted yet again. You see, I have pictures set up at the table so that when she has meals, there are little tokens of her past to gaze at.

Those are the moments that pull me through the hard parts of the day. Especially days when we don't have an aide.

This past weekend was one of those times, not from a "it's hard" perspective, but not having assistance. I actually wrote down everything we did, when we did it and how mom was doing throughout the day. It galvanized why, at 7:45 p.m., I am "done."

The thought of all the families out there who might have a loved one like my mom at home, have their own children and likely grandchildren rippled through my mind; and I am reminded that we all carry a heavy load even if it looks easy from the outside. Or the outside view is we are doing what we are expected to do.

I've said that Mom makes caring for her easy; it's all the other stuff that is hard. Family dynamics, finances, appointments, commitments, life-planning, socializing, work, play, health, the list goes on.

Someone asked me recently "how do you do it" – my response was I just do it. I don't think about the time it takes to do things that need to be done – you just get it done – regardless of how I feel. A lot of us fit things in – like a cup filling up. But what happens when the cup runs over; is that something we realize? Or realize too late.

Sometimes, maybe, the weight of a situation is dependent upon the person bearing the weight. We need to learn, adapt, pivot and change so that weight doesn't hold us in place and we can still take one step in front of the other.

Know that you are not alone.

With peace and kindness,
Tonya Maurer – Amston
Alzheimer's Hot Line 1-800-272-3900

No Data Center in Colchester

To the Editor:

Without data centers, I could not have sent this email. I understand that they are important in society today and they have a lot of benefits. However, they also destroy the Earth. They negatively impact all living organisms, including us.

In Colchester, the town has proposed a possible data center on Amston road. This area is considered a wetland and these help to purify our water, so without it, there could be huge consequences for our drinking water.

Personally, I believe that this data center should not be built in Colchester. The land must be preserved. Colchester is a farming town, and we need farmland because it produces food. If we were to build a data center, we would destroy the land surrounding the area. According to Yale, waste from these data centers can increase surrounding land temperatures by up to 16 degrees and air temperatures by 4 degrees. This would contribute to the destruction of crops and other plants. Not only that, we would disrupt migration patterns for lots of different animals and insects such as birds and butterflies.

Data centers also negatively impact the health of people. If we were to build one in town, the number of asthma cases would spike and could cause 1,300 premature deaths. Air quality would decrease due to greenhouse gas emissions which could cause even more respiratory, or cardiovascular illnesses. As well as the health effects, residents of Colchester would have to pay much more for energy than they otherwise would. Due to the increased number of data centers, people have paid 37% more on energy bills since 2020 as said by the Environmental Health Project.

All in all, data centers are essential for modern life, but they should be built in areas where nature is limited, not in places such as Colchester where we rely on wetlands and good farming land.

Ella Jeffries – Colchester

Building Moratorium Needed

To the Editor:

In regards to the pending construction project in the Lake Pocotopaug watershed on Lake Road: This is not about individual or land-use rights; it is about protecting by rigorous regulation and enforcement, East Hampton, Lake Pocotopaug and our environment from destruction regardless of who the property owner may be. Implementing an immediate 12-month building moratorium in the watershed is not just a precaution; it is an urgent necessity until such time that the P&Z approves the POCD and backs that up with enforcement of revised 3.1 regulations.

Prior (and ongoing) housing projects in East Hampton have been fraught with all manner of documented questionable practices. To name a few: Weak enforcement by P&Z officials, claiming "no authority"; use of police to intimidate concerned citizens who dared to document violations of codes; threats of building "low-income" housing vs "McMansions"; "Scorched-earth" land clearing; improperly issued or incomplete permits; noise pollution 5-6 days

See Letters, page 6

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American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

Members of the public are invited to

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

State Project No. 0120-0097
Rehabilitation of Bridge Nos. 02393 and 02394
Carrying Route 11 over Eightmile River
in Salem

Thursday, November 19, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Attend & Learn More:
portal.ct.gov/DOTSalem0120-0097

The purpose of this meeting is to provide the community with an opportunity to learn about the proposed project and allow an open discussion of any views and comments concerning the proposed improvements. A Q&A session will immediately follow the presentation.

Originally constructed in 1971, the bridges have exceeded their original design lifespan and will undergo superstructure replacements to extend their service life and improve safety for all roadway users.

Right-of-way impacts are not anticipated.

Construction is expected to start spring 2029, depending on funding, right-of-way acquisition, and permits. The estimated cost is $16 million, with 80 percent Federal funds and 20 percent State funds.

The public can submit comments and questions during two-week public comment period following the meeting. Comments and questions can be submitted by Thursday, December 3, 2026, to **DOTProject120-97@ct.gov** or 860-594-2020.

ACCESSIBILITY

Non-English language closed captioning will be available on YouTube. The recording will also be posted following the meeting in CTDOT's public meeting playlist at **portal.ct.gov/ctdotVPIMarchive**.

For audio only, call 877-853-5257 with Meeting ID 852 4368 4473. Project information can be mailed within one week by contacting Brianna Ritacco at **Brianna.Ritacco@ct.gov** or 860-594-3205.

Individuals with hearing/speech disabilities can dial 711 for Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS). Request language assistance from CTDOT's Language Assistance at 860-594-2109 at least five business days before meeting.

RE11-6-26

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RE11-13-26

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★ *Letters, cont. from page 5*

a week; work performed outside of town ordinance work hours; questionable/changing environmental studies completed by "independent" sources; actual property configuration inconsistent with plans on file; recurring runoff into the lake from construction sites.

In April of 2024, the TC received a letter highlighting issues of weak enforcement, out of date regulations, runoff, and time wasted under the guise of "reviews and "further study" and today, concrete changes still elude us. We cannot and should not sit idly by as uncontrolled growth threatens to disrupt our lives and the environment we cherish. Application of existing development ordinances, regulations and applicable law by P&Z, Wetlands, and the Town Council is inadequate to prevent irrevocable public harm in affected geographical areas.

Lake Pocotopaug is in danger due to uncontrolled runoff, enforcement of building regulations is weak or non-existent, and our elected officials, while having the means and tools at their disposal, continue to debate rather than take definitive action.

Unfortunately, we have limited ability to stop the project itself from going forward, but East Hampton elected officials can commit to change history and be sure that this project is done by the "book," not business as usual. An immediate 12-month moratorium on watershed development is the logical answer, before any more damage is done.

Regards,
Bob Yenkner – East Hampton

Honored and Humbled

To the Editor:

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Portland Republican Town Committee, everyone who came out in May to support my nomination, and everyone who cast their vote for me in this election.

I cannot adequately express how honored and humbled I am by the tremendous support I received, especially in an election that saw such strong Democratic support at the local, state, and national levels!

Although my Democratic counterpart received more votes, we both won! I am especially grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside not only my fellow registrar, but also my very dear friend.

Together, we will continue doing what we love: serving the town of Portland and all of its voters, regardless of political party or affiliation.

Above all, we are a team, united in our commitment to ensuring that every eligible voter has equal access to our elections and that each election is conducted with integrity, fairness, and transparency.

Thank you again, Portland, for your trust, confidence, and support. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve as your registrar of voters!

Sincerely,
Cynthia J. Hickey – Portland

First Amendment

To the Editor:

Stephen Markson states in his Nov. 6th letter that a political advertisement issued by the Middletown Bible Church which criticized socialism and Marxism violated "the wisdom of the framers of our Constitution in the separation of church and state."

Mr. Markson is incorrect.

The Establishment and Free Exercise clauses of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution read as follows: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Over the last 100 years, the Supreme Court, through court decisions, has broadened the applicability of the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses to cover state and municipal governments.

The two clauses protect religion from government--and not government from religion. That's a huge and purposeful distinction. Churches can certainly comment on governmental matters.

In the 19th century, many clergy called for the abolition of slavery. In the 20th century, many clergy called for the prohibition of alcohol. In the 1950s, many clergy called for civil rights for African Americans. In the 1960s, many clergy called for the United States to withdraw from the Vietnam War. In the 1980s, many clergy called for nuclear disarmament. In the 1990s, many clergy called for reducing carbon emissions in the world's atmosphere. And, in 2026, the Middletown Bible Church called for people to reject socialism and Marxism.

The Middletown Bible Church is on firm constitutional ground.

Mark Shea – Moodus

Charter Commission

To the Editor:

It's been over 20 years since Portland has opened the town charter and it is imperative the commission uses its time in make meaningful changes for the long-term success of Portland. The commission is not restricted to its duties and shall gather comments from town residence and submit their recommendation first to the BOS and then as a referendum within the next 16 months. The future of the town hinges on the commission's actions and recommendations.

A change the commission should implement is adding a town manager position in lieu of the first selectman position.

Surrounding towns have seen substantial growth in their retail, commercial and residential tax base after switching from a first selectman position to a town manager as chief administrative officer.

As the pool of qualified candidates for first selectman has become almost nonexistent, towns have switched to a nonpartisan town manager based on qualifications and experience. Town managers typical have a degree in public administration, political science or business administration with employment experience in public service. The position of first selectman at a salary of $90K/year is no longer a ribbon-cutting job with no experience required. The position has evolved into requiring education and experience in local and public policies, budgets, long range planning, public utilities, economic development programs, police, fire & emergency response programs, grant writing, labor law, contracts, negotiation/arbitration with unions, healthcare insurance policies, understanding of ethics, procedures under existing charter rules and town ordinances, leadership and interpersonal communications, and administration of town departments and employees. Maintaining professionalism and representing the town is paramount when meeting state or federal officials to gain funding.

Town managers are typically required to live or move to the town and operate under, and at the direction of the BOS. The BOS would set policy and budgetary direction, and the town manager would translate those priorities to actionable programs and services. Maintaining employment would be based on performance.

The time to change our charter and install a town manager is now to compete with surrounding towns for business, retail and residential growth to lessen the tax burden of homeowners in the years to come and return Portland to a thriving town.

This letter was submitted to the first selectman's office prior to the Nov. 12 commission meeting. To support this change or other changes submit letters to the commission via mcepaglia@portlandct.org.

Rose Aletta – Portland

Thank You, Sponsors

To the Editor:

I am writing on behalf of the East Hampton Athletic Hall of Fame, which inducted Gyanna Russell, Scott Wosleger, Eric Peck, Patrick Rubega, and Parker Strong on Oct. 23rd (20th year), bringing our total to 69 inductees.

It was a great night but we couldn't have done it without the help of our local business sponsors. They are Center Package Store, Blackledge Country Club, East Hampton Belltown Little League, American Distilling, Mark's United Auto Parts, Dr. George M. Mantikas D.M.D, Paul's & Sandy's Too, Inc., Kenneth Barber & Associates LLC, East Hampton Ace Hardware, Classic Auto, and Dickinson's Original Witch Hazel.

We are in need of additional sponsors. If you are interested, please e-mail me below and I will set up a meeting to discuss.

We are looking for additional sports minded individuals who have knowledge of the history of athletics in East Hampton. If you are interested, or if you would like to nominate an athlete, coach, team, or contributor for 2027, please email me at seidlt@sbcglobal.net.

Sincerely,
Tom Seidl
East Hampton Athletic Hall of Fame

Poor Dear

To the Editor:

Jeff Maguire, the poor dear, is being bullied.

I guess the mediators hurt his feelings when they told him that he's not in charge of our school, that the people we elected to run it and the people they've hired are in charge. Poor Jeff. He really wants to threaten to take his toys and go home. But they're not his toys. Not even the gymnasium, which he's trying to take over. All because the school has the temerity to favor children's basketball programs over Scott Person's pickleball time.

So after being rebuked by Connecticut officials, after being told that the school not only does not need to account to him, and that he can't condition on anything the transfer of voter-approved funds, after being informed that the school has the legal right to demand its whole budget up front, he attempts another end-run around the voters and the law. Monday night, the BOS passed a motion that would put all school funds in an account "under the supervision and oversight of the Town Treasurer."

Anne Cremé abstained, saying that this is not the business of the BOS. It's hard to blame Dave Gostanian and Christine Randazzo for voting in favor of this blatantly illegal law. They're too new to realize that they're just pawns in Maguire's petty attempts to control something that's not his to control. But Maguire and Person know what they're doing. They know they don't have the authority. Maguire was informed of it by the state.

He just thinks that if he cries loudly enough, people will let him have his cookie just to shut him up.

The poor dear.

Sincerely,
Scott Sauyet – Andover

Note: *Sauyet is co-chair of the Andover Democratic Town Committee and a member of the RHAM Board of Education, but said he is writing as an individual.*

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Thanksgiving Food Drive

Hebron Interfaith Human Services (HIHS) invites the community to contribute to its Thanksgiving food drive. Neighbors, businesses and community groups are all welcome to participate.

Donations of non-perishable sides such as stuffing mix, gravy, cranberry sauce, vegetables and dessert mixes will be collected through Nov. 15. Collections boxes are located at Hebron Town Hall, Ted's IGA (box inside the store as you exit) and at the HIHS Food Pantry, located at 26 Pendleton Drive. Furthermore, a turkey and frozen pie collection will occur on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., at the food pantry.

Grocery gift cards and monetary donations are also accepted. Visit www.hihsct.org/donate to learn more.

National Take-a-Hike! Day

Celebrate National Take-a-Hike! Day on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 10-11:30 a.m., with a Trail Ranger and Hebron Paths & Trails Guided Hike at Hebron's Town Center Trail.

This guided hike of the Hebron Center Trail, a 2-mile plus little-known nature trail system in the midst of Hebron's town center. Meet at the Veterans Park parking lot on Wall Street, across from RHAM, at 9:45 a.m. and take the walking path from the park. The trail will take people through town-owned Open Space, through preserved forests, along wetlands, and over a pedestrian bridge on its way to the Main Street trail head at Ted's IGA Plaza.

Hikers may then continue the adventure on sidewalks along Main and Wall streets leading back to Veterans Park or else backtrack along the nature trail to the park.

A trail brochure and map are available at tinyurl.com/trailbrochure, or go to hebronpaths.org and select the Town Center trail for a map.

The hike is easy to moderate, on mostly smooth and level surface. Pets on leashes are welcome. As always when hiking, wear bright clothing, tick protection, and be sure shoe soles are clean when entering. The event is free and open to all. Steady or heavy rain cancels the event.

St. Peter's News & Notes

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, located at 30 Church St., welcomes all to worship. Priest is the Rev. Ron Kolanowski. For more information, visit stpetershebron.com, search for St. Peter's Hebron on Facebook, or call the parish office at 860-228-3244. The church's mailing address is P.O. Box 513, Hebron, CT 06248.

Sunday Communion Worship: Communion services, where all are welcome, are held at 8 a.m. (Rite 1) and 10 a.m. (Rite 2). Sunday School is at 10 a.m. A coffee fellowship follows each service. The 10 a.m. service is livestreamed on Facebook. Visit www.stpetershebron.com to join.

Weekly Virtual Coffee Hour: Wednesdays at 10 a.m., via Zoom. Call the office at 860-228-3244 for Zoom information.

Project Hope Meal Assembly: Saturday, Nov. 14, 2 p.m., in the parish hall. Please have all food contributions in the parish hall by Saturday morning.

Veterans Day Recognition Sunday: Nov. 15 at both 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. services.

Outreach: Food donations support the local food pantries. A collection basket is in the church and outside the parish hall. St. Peter's maintains a nature preserve in the center of Hebron for use by local nonprofits. The church is also a supporter of Project Hope (homeless shelter) in Willimantic.

Weekly Meetings: Contact the church for more information on the following: Balance Class: Mondays, 10:15 a.m., $5; Connect: Mondays at 2:30 p.m.; Choir, Wednesdays at 6 p.m. in the sanctuary – new voices welcome.

Monthly Meetings: Building and Grounds, Community Events planning, Finance, Hall Committee, Worship, Pastoral Care and Vestry. Also, the Women's Club typically meets the third or fourth Sunday each month for crafting and fellowship.

Editor's Desk continued from page 4

Answer the housewives with streaming eyes,
"No molasses for pumpkin pies!"
The sloop that fetches the precious freight,
Thanksgiving molasses, is late, is late,
And how can Colchester celebrate!

Colchester housewives are gay and glad—
Colchester housewives bake like mad.
No feast decreed by the governor, this,
But Colchester colonists shall not miss
Their dinner, though late by a week and a day—
The sloop's in the harbor—Hurray! Hurray!
Thanksgiving molasses for all the town,
For pies of pumpkin so rich and brown;
Colchester folk at last sit down.

See you next week.

St. Peter's Roast Pork Tenderloin Dinner

St. Peter's Episcopal Church will hold its next monthly community dinner on Saturday, Nov. 21, starting at 3:30 p.m., at the church, located at 30 Church St. (Route 85) in Hebron.

The menu will include pork tenderloin, gravy, applesauce, roasted potatoes, winter squash, rolls and dessert. The cost is $18, and credit cards will be accepted.

This meal is takeout-only. You will be given a ticket for each meal you order. A server will come to your car, take your ticket(s), your payment, and your dessert order. They will bring your change, meal and dessert back to your car, and place all in your back seat or trunk. You won't need to get out of your car.

As part of the St. Peter's outreach programs, a portion of each meal sold this month will go to the Windham Area Interfaith Ministry.

For more details, please contact the church at 860-228-3244 or visit the church website at www.StPetersHebron.com.

The Worship Center News & Notes

The Worship Center, a non-denominational Christian church, holds services and programs at 99 Marjorie Circle (unless noted). For more information and full program descriptions, visit worshipcenter.church and click on the 'events/calendar' link, or call 860-228-4442.

Worship: Services are Sundays at 10 a.m. and are also broadcast on social media. Connect with the library at www.facebook.com/WorshipCenterCT, youtube.com/@worshipcenterct and instagram.com/theworshipcenterct.

Adult Bible Study: Every Sunday at 9 a.m. The study, on the First Epistle of Peter, is led by Elder George Logan. The theme is "Standing Firm in Grace: A Call to Holiness in a Hostile World." All adults welcome.

Kingdom Women: Women's Bible Study: Meets in-person every first and third Thursday of the month from 6:45-7:45 p.m., at the church. The study will continue on the book of Psalms. Zoom access is available. Upcoming: Thursday, Nov. 19.

Youth Ministry: Grades 6-12 are invited every first and third Friday of the month from 6:30–9:30 p.m. for activities, games, Bible lessons, dinner, dessert, and community. Upcoming: Nov. 20.

Operation Christmas Child: Pick up your boxes at the welcome desk (labels inside). Visit: Samaritanspurse.org/occ for more information. Return boxes to TWC by Nov. 22.

Kingdom Men: Men's Breakfast: Saturday, Nov. 21, 9-10:30 a.m. Men eating bacon and building each other up on our spiritual walk.

Virtual Prayer Night: Tuesdays, 7-8 p.m., via Zoom. Contact the church office or website for a link and meeting ID.

One-to-One Confidential Christian Care: Provided by Stephen Ministry to people in difficult life situations. If in need of help, call the church office.

TWC Upward Running Club: Upward Running at The Worship Center. This class is designed to improve faith, fitness and fellowship within our community through a walking and/or running program custom made for your fitness level. Download the app, or contact the church office for more details. Training sessions meet at the church on Saturdays from 8–9 a.m., culminating with a 5K in late November/early December.

Bottle Drive

Scouting America Troop 28/1028 in Hebron will have a bottle drive on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at Ted's Supermarket, 127 Main St.

ENTERTAINMENT

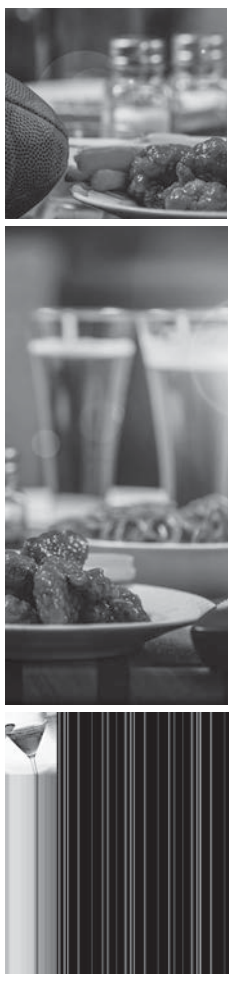
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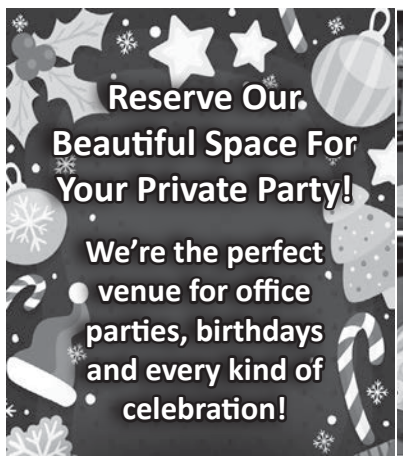
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Douglas Library News & Notes

Douglas Library, located at 22 Main St., has announced the following. For a full listing of weekly events and more information, call the library at 860-228-9312 or visit douglaslibrary.org.

Adult Programs: Medicare Fraud and Other Scams: Wednesday, Nov. 18, 1 p.m. Jill Vasington from Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) will talk about preventing medicare fraud and the current scams that are targeting older adults.

Blood Drive: Monday, Nov. 23, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Donors receive an exclusive coffee mug. Register at RedCrossBlood.org.

Artist of the Month: Local artist Christiane O'Brien is October's featured artist. Her art is in the Community Room.

Blood Drive: Monday, Nov. 23, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Donors will receive an exclusive coffee mug. Register at RedCrossBlood.org.

Teens: Teen Book Group: Thursday, Nov. 19, 6:30 p.m. This month, read and discuss "The Ghost Hunter's Daughter." Books are available on shelves near Teen Zone. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month; everyone aged 12 and up is welcome.

D&D Club: Group 1 meets Friday, Nov. 20, from 3:30-5:30 p.m., and Group 2 meets Saturday, Nov. 21, from 12:30-2:30 p.m. Pre-made character sheets and dice are provided. New players welcome! Register by contacting the library.

Gilead Congregational Church News

Gilead Congregational Church, an Open and Affirming Congregation located at 672 Gilead St., has announced the following. For more info, visit gileadchurch.ucc.org. church, email gcc@gileadchurch.net, or call the Parish House at 860-228-3077. The church office is open at the GCC Parish House Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The weekly bulletin is at gileadchurchucc.updates.church.

Worship: Sundays at 10 a.m., with coffee hour at 11 a.m. Services can also be viewed online at YouTube at www.bit.ly/GileadChurchUCC and on Facebook at tinyurl.com/GileadChurchUCC.

This Week: 11/13, 7 p.m., Hebron Chorus Concert in Sanctuary; 11/15, 11:30 a.m., New Member Class in sanctuary; 11/15, 11:30 a.m., Board of Missions Meeting in Parish House Conference Room; 11/16, 9:30 a.m., Online Bible Study via Zoom; 11/16, 5:45 p.m., Girl Scout Troop 61096 Meeting in Fellowship Hall; 11/17, 7:30 p.m., AA Meeting in Fellowship Hall; 11/18, 9:30 a.m., Wise Warrior Yoga in Fellowship Hall; 11/18, 10:45 a.m., Book Group in Fellowship Hall; 11/18, 7 p.m., Choir Practice in Sanctuary; 11/19, 7 p.m., Church Council Meeting in Parish House Conference Room

Upcoming Events: Hebron Community Chorus Concert at Gilead: Friday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m. "The Songs We Carry" will be performed. Suggested donation is $20.

New Member Class: Curious about what membership means at Gilead Church? Join us for a new member class Sunday, Nov. 15, at 11:30 a.m. There will be a new member ceremony during a worship service in December.

Hebron's Community Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at Gilead Church: Sunday, Nov. 22, at 3 p.m., co-hosted by Gilead Church, Church of the Holy Family, St. Peter's Church, and the United Brethren Synagogue.

Card-Making with Gayle: Create one-of-a-kind seasonal cards Thursday, Dec. 3, at 6 p.m. Cost is $15 per class, with a portion of proceeds benefitting the Connecticut Food Bank.

Faith & Film Potluck: Friday, Dec. 4, 6 p.m. All are welcome - no RSVP necessary.

#HebronRocksAlz Events

The Walk to End Alzheimer's team #HebronRocksAlz has various events coming up where people can participate, stop by, learn more about resources, purchase a T-shirt, donate, join the walk team, or share your story with those that have lived experiences.

Events Where Registration is Required: Sunday, Nov. 15, 11:30 a.m.: Introduction to Jewelry-Making at St. Peter's Church; cost is $25. Contact Tonya Maurer at multitasking@comcast.net or 860-539-9287 (call/text) to register.

Christ Lutheran Church News and Notes

Christ Lutheran Church and Early Childhood Center (daycare) is located at 330 Church St.

Worship Service with Pastor Matthew Hardaway: 9-10 a.m. Sundays. All are welcome. People unable to attend services in person can participate online at www.facebook.com/clchebron/live.

Sunday Bible Study: Sundays at 10:30 a.m., following service and fellowship time. All are welcome. **Men's Bible Study:** Saturday, Nov 14, 8 a.m. Topic: Bible on Trial.

Early Childhood Center (Daycare): Offers childcare, preschool, and before/after school care, and is open to all children, regardless of faith. For more information, call director Jennifer Johnson at 860-228-5134. Application forms are at www.clecchebron.org.

Caring Shepherds Social Ministry Group: There are open food pantry days held to distribute food staples, household and hygiene items as well as Bibles and prayers. The next one is Saturday, Nov. 7, at 9 a.m. For more information about donating or participating in food pantry days, call 860-228-1152.

Good Shepherd Parish News

The Church of the Holy Family (CHF), located at 185 Church St. (Route 85), Hebron, is yoked with St. Columba Church (STC) in Columbia, and together are members of the Catholic Community of the Good Shepherd, with the Rev. Michael Phillippino serving as pastor. The parish office can be reached at 860-228-3727 ext. 105 Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (note the new hours)

Mass Schedule: Mass is offered at CHF Saturday at 5 p.m. and Sunday at 10 a.m., and at STC Sunday at 8 a.m. Visit www.goodshepherdct.org for weekday Mass times.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: The pastor is available for the sacrament at CHF on Thursdays at 7 a.m. and on Saturdays at 4 p.m., and at STC on Wednesdays at 7 a.m. and Sundays at 7:15 a.m., or by appointment (church phone ext. 110).

Praise Band and Choir Rehearsals: Rehearsals take place at CHF from 7-8:30 p.m., on Tuesdays for the choir and on Thursdays for the Praise Band. New voices and musical instruments are always welcome.

Youth Ministry: This group for parish teens in grades 8-12 meets once a month from September through June in the STC Youth Center for an evening of games, food, and discussion. The next meeting, "Faithsgiving," will be held Saturday, Nov. 14, from 6:30–8:15 p.m. Students are invited to bring a favorite Thanksgiving dish to share. Prompt RSVP to the email invitation is requested to coordinate the meal.

Cereal & Meatloaves for CSK: The Community Outreach Committee collects breakfast cereal each month for Covenant Soup Kitchen (CSK) in Willimantic; the next date is Dec. 13. Cereal donations are also welcome any time; place bagged donations in the oak collection box near the CHF Robing Room. The parish also provides meatloaves to CSK each month. Parishioners can deliver a cooked meatloaf to the freezer in the garage (use side entrance) closest to the CHF Parish House or the freezer in the STC church hall by the 4th Tuesday of the month. Meatloaves are delivered the next day. The next due date is Nov. 17 due to the Thanksgiving holiday. Contact Diane (860-508-9959) for more information.

Knights of Columbus Food Drive: The Knights are sponsoring a food drive for CSK throughout the month of November.

Annual WAIM (Windham Area Interfaith Ministry) Walk for Warmth: Parishioners are asked to support this important fundraiser that kicks off on Nov. 22 at 2:15 p.m. at Temple Bnai Israel in Willimantic to raise $40,000 to provide energy and rental assistance to those in need. See the parish bulletin for details on how to donate directly to WAIM, sponsor a walker, or to participate in the walk and raise funds.

Project Hope (Adult Homeless Shelter): Current needs: medical masks; "3-in-one" shampoo, conditioner and body wash; all types of cleaning products, especially bleach; 2- and 3-person tents; size XL cold to frigid weather sleeping bags; 8x10 and 10x12 tarps (green or brown, no blue); new and gently used (clean & in good condition, please) fall & winter men's and women's outerwear (coats, gloves, & hats); durable heavy crew socks, sweatshirts, sweatpants & hoodies; and hand and foot warmers. Contact Monica (860-228-4211) for more information.

Holy Family Home & Shelter (Family Homeless Shelter): Current needs: New or gently used sweatshirts, hoodies and sweatpants (adult sizes small through 3XL; children sizes toddler through 14); women's socks; and baby hygiene products (shampoo, soap, lotion, diaper wipes, rash cream, powder & grooming sets). Place donations in the designated collection boxes in each church. Contact Monica for more information.

"Freedom" Winter Clothing Drive: The parish Anti-Human Trafficking Ministry is supporting women and men survivors of human trafficking on their journey to healing through a collection of new or gently used winter clothing (clean and in good condition, please) of hats, gloves, scarves and boots for adult men and women (all sizes). Place donations in the labeled boxes in the entryways of each church. Contact Caroline (619-997-0548) for more information.

Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA): Held in the CHF Parish House after the 10 a.m. Mass. The sessions will run 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. and are open to adults who wish to join the Catholic church, Catholic adults who have not yet completed the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation), and Catholic adults who wish to learn more about their faith. Email ocia@goodshepherdct.org for more information and to register.

Homebound Ministry: The parish ministers to homebound parishioners who wish to receive the sacraments. Call the parish office (860-228-3727 ext. 105 or 110) to set up a schedule.

Health Ministry: This ministry has wheelchairs and walkers available to parishioners who may need them. Contact the parish office (see info above) or email parishhands@goodshepherdct.org for more information and where to donate.

Transfer Station Hours Change

Hebron Transfer Station hours have changed to the winter schedule as of Nov. 1. Hours are now: Sundays, 7:30 a.m.-2 p.m.; and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

Turkey Shoots Weekly

Skungamaug Fish and Game Club is hold its annual turkey shoots Sundays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. through Nov. 22, at the club, 423 Jones St., Hebron.

All are welcome.

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Council Names New Finance Director

By Toriana Williams

The Hebron Town Council approved the appointment of a new finance director and several requests during its Nov. 5 meeting. The council also approved the purchase of a new $79,733 dump truck for the Department of Public Works and passed new social media guidelines for town workers.

Finance Director Starts in December

The council approved the appointment of Valerie Belles as Hebron's new finance director, and her first day will be Dec. 14. Council members welcomed Belles and said the town has important financial work ahead.

"We're really at an inflection point in terms of finances and getting them in order," said Chair Tiffany Thiele, a Democrat.

The council also thanked the Board of Finance Chair Brian Thibeault for his support and said having a full-time finance director would help the town improve its financial work.

New DPW Dump Truck

The council approved a request from the Department of Public Works to purchase a new Mason dump truck from Scranton Motors for no more than $79,733.15. Director of Public Works Paul Forrest explained that the truck would replace one that is more than 20 years old.

The town had already approved $95,000 for the truck through its Capital Improvement Program, however, the DPW asked the council to waive the usual bidding process because a truck that met its needs was already available.

Forrest said the state bidding process was taking too long, there were no trucks in stock through that process and that Scranton Motors had the truck available. The purchase price includes a trade-in for the old truck. The new truck will also receive a dump body, plow and sander.

Forrest said the current plan is to keep the old truck running until the new one arrives so the department would not be without a working vehicle. He hoped to have the new truck by the end of the year.

Council Considers Adding Juneteenth as Paid Holiday

The council discussed adding Juneteenth, June 19, to the town's paid holiday schedule.

Juneteenth marks the end of slavery in the United States. Strange specified that the holiday recognizes June 19, 1865, when Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced that enslaved people were free.

Council members supported adding the holiday but wanted to remove the existing floating holiday so employees would not receive another paid day off, while others wanted to keep the floating holiday.

Members also raised concerns about union contracts which cannot be changed without further negotiations.

"I think Juneteenth is important and I think we should acknowledge it, but I could agree to remove the floating holiday," said Thiele.

After discussion, the council voted on the proposal. Thiele, fellow Democrat Jan Lawrence, and Republicans Sean Fitzgerald and Keith Petit, all voted against adding Juneteenth as a paid holiday, at least not until union contracts can be renegotiated. Democrat Claudia Riley voted in favor. The motion failed 4-1.

Members said they still wanted to find a fair way to recognize the holiday while respecting union agreements.

Sewer System Repairs Needed

The council approved a supplemental funding request from the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) for needed repairs to the town's sewer system.

WPCA Administrator Kevin Kelly said the work would cost about $32,000. One major part of the work involves finding and repairing air release valves along Route 85, where the valves were paved over years ago and need to be uncovered and checked. Kelly said four valves may need to be replaced.

The valves help protect the sewer force main from damage, and he spoke of a past failure in Colchester that cost millions of dollars to replace and repair. Hebron also had to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars towards that repair.

"[I'm] trying to be proactive and making sure these air valves are up and running. I think it's an important maintenance issue that should be done as soon as possible," said Kelly.

The request also included work at the Amston Village pump station, which includes replacing interior pipes, as well as work at the Old Railroad station, which needs a leaking valve and surge protector replaced.

Kelly said some of the repairs were already covered in the WPCA operating budget, but the extra funding would help cover work that could push spending over budget.

The council approved the request pending approval from the Board of Finance.

Library Faces Rising Costs

Douglas Library Director Drusilla Carter gave the council a detailed report about the library's services, programs, staff and future needs.

Carter explained that the library does much more than lend books, as it provides free programs, technology, meeting spaces, help with research and many other services.

In the 2026 fiscal year, the library loaned out 73,909 items. During the first three months of the current fiscal year, it had already loaned out 20,629 items. The library also saw an average of 1,041 visitors each week during the first quarter of the fiscal year.

Carter said the library offered 488 programs, with 6,402 people attending.

"We are very lucky, but there's still a lot of challenges to libraries and library programs," said Carter.

Carter explained that the library offers books for all ages, movies, audiobooks and more. Residents can also borrow board games, musical instruments, baking pans, sewing machines and yard games. The library even has a typewriter because people in the area had asked for one.

The library also provides free technology help, public computers, Wi-Fi, meeting rooms and access to online learning resources.

Carter shared that rising costs are making it harder to provide all these services. The library building needs attention as well.

She referenced problems with the heating and air conditioning system, the building's older security system, the fire alarm system and the flooring in the community room, which she said is becoming a safety concern.

The older part of the building also needs outside repairs and painting, and some areas have dry rot, which can make repairs more expensive.

The library is open 47 hours each week and has three full-time employees and 12 part-time employees. Keeping the building open and running with that amount of staff can be difficult, said Carter.

She also said some employees have paid for their own training and travel because the library's budget does not always cover those costs.

In response, council members said the town should plan better for these expenses.

"We don't want employees taking what they should be getting from us in benefits out of their own pocket," said Petit.

Town Looks for More Water Sources

During the town manager's report, Strange shared updates on several town projects. One major project was the search for more water sources for the town center area.

The town and the Common CDC recently drilled four wells, two of which were on town property and two on Common CDC property. The two Common CDC wells did not produce much water, so the contractor plans to look for another place to drill.

One of the two wells on town property produced about 30 gallons of water per minute. Strange said that was a good result and could help the town's water system. However, the other town well didn't produce much water, which was another disappointing result.

The town plans to drill another well near Raymond Brook Preserve, and it will also meet with Connecticut Water to discuss plans if more water is found.

Strange said he was concerned about the low water results at the Common CDC property because of the large housing project planned for the area. He asked to invite Common CDC representatives to a January council meeting to give an update and show a map of the drilling work.

Other News

During the meeting, Strange also reported that the town's veterinary hospital owner was interested in expansion plans and that the town would continue looking into other projects.

The council received an update on the town's celebration of America's 250th anniversary, and the final events included a film and tour about Jewish immigrants in Eastern Connecticut, a talk about people involved in the American Revolution and a visit to the historic Burrows Hill School.

Senior Center News & Notes

Russell Mercier Senior Center has announced the following programs. For more information, see the online senior newsletter at hebronct.com/town-departments/senior-center, or call the center at 860-228-1700. **Registration is required for all programs, unless noted, by calling the center or stopping in.** If the program has a fee you must pay at the time of registration with cash or check. Register at the programs/transportation office window.

Special Events: RHAM Bingo: Monday, Nov. 16, 2:30 p.m. Students from the RHAM National Honor Society will host the event – calling all eight games, serving refreshments, and handing out prizes. You can play up to four cards completely free.

Friendsgiving Potluck Lunch: Wednesday, Nov. 18, noon. Sign up to bring a dish, a dessert or an appetizer. Sign up list will be located outside of the program window. If you do not want to bring a dish you can still attend. This program is free.

Tour of Synagogue and Hannukah Celebration: Tuesday, Dec. 1, noon. Take a tour of the United Brethren of Hebron Synagogue. Located just up the hill from the Senior Center at 10 Church Street, the building is listed in both the state and national Registers of Historic Places, and has many unique design features not typically found in other rural Jewish houses of worship. Participants will meet at the synagogue and then head to the senior center after the tour for latkes and apple cider. People of all faiths, traditions, and backgrounds are welcome to join this free event.

Recurring Daily/Weekly Happenings: More information in the monthly newsletter or at the senior center. **Monday through Friday:** Exercise Equipment Room, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., or 9 a.m.-noon on Fridays.

Mondays: Enhance Fitness via Zoom with Paul Smith, 9-10 a.m.

Tuesdays: Tech Connect Appointments, 9-11 a.m.; Knitting/Crocheting Group, 10:15-11:45 a.m.; Hand and Foot Canasta (cards), 12:45-3:15 p.m.; Card-Making, 1-2:15 p.m. (pre-registration required)

Wednesdays: Massage, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; Enhance Fitness via Zoom with Paul Smith, 9-10 a.m.; Free Zumba Gold Video, 10:15-11:15 a.m.; Beginner's Bridge, 1 p.m.

Thursdays: Weekly Shopping Trip (locations vary), 8:15 a.m.; Massage, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; Yoga, 9-10 a.m.; Sunshine Singers, 10:15-11:45 a.m.; Tai Chi, 10:15-11:15 a.m.; Mahjongg, 12:45-3:15 p.m.; Bingo, 1-3 p.m.

Fridays: Enhance Fitness via Zoom with Paul Smith, 9-10 a.m.; FABBS, 10:45-11:45 a.m.; Caregiver Support Group (3rd Friday), 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Golden Oldies Men's Social Group (4th Friday), 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Resident Graduates

Rachael Kinsley of Amston, earned a Master of Science in learning design and technology from University of Maryland Global Campus in summer 2026.

Bereavement Support Group Meets Weekly

The Grief Journey: A Bereavement Support Group will be held Wednesdays from 7- 8:30 p.m., at the Church of the Holy Family Parish House, 185 Church St.

The group will be facilitated by grief educators Michael Glazier and Stephanie Haines. All grieving adults are welcome whether your loss is recent or past and you may come to one session or as many as you would like.

This support group is non-denominational and is offered via a collaborative effort of Hebron Faith Communities. There is no registration or commitment. You are invited to attend and see if the group is a helpful, supportive place for you.

Community Chorus Fall Concert

The Hebron Community Chorus is performing its Fall Concert, The Songs We Carry, at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 13, at Gilead Congregational Church.

The chorus of 20 or so singers from Hebron and surrounding towns, is helmed by Andrey Stolyarov, who has been its director since its founding by The Town Center Project in 2022.

Visit Burrows Hill School

The Hebron Historical Society invites all to visit Burrows Hill School (125 School House Rd.) on Sunday, Nov. 15, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., to view artifacts uncovered in the Burrows Hill and Hope Valley area.

Meet the members who uncovered them and discuss their research. Agricultural, jewelry, utilitarian and other items manufactured in the area will be exhibited.

The two-room outhouse will be decorated for family photo ops and outdoor games will be available.

This is a continuation of the historical society's America 250 series. Admission is free, but donations will be accepted.

WAIM Flea Market

Windham Area Interfaith Ministry (WAIM) will hold its 5th Floor Treasures flea market on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 8 a.m.-noon, at 866 Main St.

Items offered include framed art, glassware, rockers, toys, collectibles, household finds, and more. Payment options: cash, charge and check.

WAIM is a social-service nonprofit that serves Andover and Hebron, as well as Ashford, Bolton, Chaplin, Columbia, Coventry, Hampton, Lebanon, Mansfield, Storrs, Scotland, Willington, Windham, and Willimantic.

For more information, call 860 456-7270 ext. 104 or Kathy Callahan 860-228-0873.

'Giggles at Gilead' Returns Nov. 20

Gilead Congregational Church invites all to "Giggles at Gilead" next Friday, Nov. 20, at 7 p.m., at the church, 672 Gilead St.

Presented in partnership with Funny 4 Funds, this PG-13 comedy fundraiser for the church will feature an all-new lineup of comedians, as well as raffle baskets.

Doors open at 6 p.m., and tickets are $25 per person. Popcorn will be provided; bring your favorite snacks.

Seats are limited; purchase tickets at www.bit.ly/GileadGiggles.

For more information, email gcc@gilead-church.net or call 860-228-3077.

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Author and award-winning journalist Gail McDonald recently visited with the Coalition on Diversity & Equity stories from her new book, "Abolitionists of the Northeast: Black Leaders in the Antislavery Movement."

Author Shares Stories of Black Abolitionists

Gail Braccidiferro McDonald, an award-winning journalist and retired University of Connecticut journalism professor, recently visited with the Coalition on Diversity & Equity (CoDE) to discuss stories from her new book, "Abolitionists of the Northeast: Black Leaders in the Antislavery Movement."

McDonald's work documents 29 Black New Englanders who fiercely fought for their human rights during the early 1800s.

On Thursday, Nov. 5, more than 30 participants gathered at Gilead Congregational Church in Hebron to learn about local history. The discussion focused on fearless Black abolitionists like David Ruggles, a free African American born in Norwich, who opened the first Black-owned bookstore and who founded the New York Committee of Vigilance in 1835.

"Despite their courageous advocacy, history has mostly forgotten these important Black reformers," said McDonald. "History lessons of abolition focus mainly on white allies ... but the view of a passive community of color is both skewed and inaccurate."

McDonald, author of three history books, remains active in New London community service and leads historical tours, such as Uncovering New London – One Story at a Time, and tours at the historic Cedar Grove Cemetery.

"We're grateful for Gail's professional curiosity as a journalist and shared commitment to conversations highlighting contributions of people often ignored or forgotten," said Donna Jolly, vice president of CoDE.

The program was sponsored by CoDE, an educational nonprofit organization serving the five towns of Andover, Columbia, East Hampton, Hebron, and Marlborough, as part of its ongoing Book Discussions and Author Talks. For more information about CoDE, visit www.code-diversity.org.

Hebron Preschool Screenings

The Hebron Board of Education, through the Hebron Early Childhood Center Program at Gilead Hill School, will hold two screenings in coming months for children that reside in Hebron and are 3 and 4 years old by the time of the screening.

The screenings this school year will be held at Gilead Hill School at 580 Gilead St. The screenings will take place Wednesday, Dec. 2, and Wednesday, March 3. Screens are in the areas of speech, language, cognitive, and motor development are provided as an opportunity for parents to learn more about their child's development. Parents will also receive information which will assist in fostering their child's growth.

Please contact the office of the Director of Educational Services at Hebron Public Schools at 860-228-2577 to register your child to participate in the screening as reservations are required.



Bronze for Trail Runners…. **Portland Middle School boys cross-country placed third in the Small School Division at the 33rd Annual CT Middle School XC Championships. From left: Coach Rooth, Marshall Clarke, Josh Clark, Ray Vicino, Sam Pickett, Liam Xiao, Coach Baldwin, and Leo Abid. Missing from photo: Jacob Phelps. Clark finished first in the small school division and 13th overall out of the field of 430 runners.**

St. Mary Church News & Notes

St. Mary Roman Catholic Church, located at 45 Freestone Ave., invites all to attend its services and events. For more information, visit www.stmaryportlandct.org.

Worship: Weekday Masses are Monday and Tuesday at 8 a.m., and Friday at 12:10 p.m. Weekend Masses are Saturday at 5 p.m. and Sunday at 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Reconciliation: Saturdays between 4 and 4:45 p.m. Call 860-342-2308 to make arrangements. **Baptism:** Call Sue Ferraiolo at 860-342-2308 to make arrangements. **Marriages:** Contact the office at 860-342-2328 to make an appointment with the Rev. John Antonelle.

Holy Hour Benediction: First Friday of every month following the 12:10 p.m. Mass.

Blessed Mother Mass: First Saturday of every month at 9 a.m.

Hours of Operation: Church hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Friday.



Funds for Food & Fuel… **Thanks to donations from the local community, the Portland Lions Club, in partnership with Portland Public Works and Adams Hometown Market, recently raised $1,000, which will be used for the Portland Food Bank and the Portland Fuel Bank. On Oct. 3, a Portland Department of Public Works truck was on display at Adams Hometown Market in Portland as part of the "Fill a Truck" event. People had the chance to see the truck and help contribute to the cause. Pictured from left are Ralph Zampano. Wayne Chapman, Tom Saracono, Peter Lord, Liz Tripp, Jim Tripp, Kevin Supinski, and Joe Mansi.**

2026 Leaf Pickup

The Town of Portland Department of Public Works will conduct its annual leaf pickup beginning Monday, Nov. 30.

Leaves must be placed in paper bags at the curb so as not to cause a sight line issue. Leaves must be out no later than Nov. 29. Plastic bags will not be picked up.

Residents who do not place their leaves at the curb can bring them to the transfer station (permit required). Leaves not in paper bags must be emptied by the resident in an area at the transfer station designated by the attendant.

Public Works requests that homeowners refrain from blowing or raking leaves into the roadway as blocking the storm drain inlets may cause flooding and create safety hazards.

For more information, call Public Works at 860-342-6733.

Zion Lutheran News & Notes

Zion Lutheran Church is located at 183 William St. All are invited to participate in worship. Sara Stall-Ryan is pastor.

Worship Notes: Zion offers Sunday worship each week at 9 a.m.

Learning: Sunday School for children ages 3 through 8th grade is offered the first and third Sunday of the month, following worship. Contact the church office for more information.

Adult Education is held following worship on the second and fourth Sunday of the month.

Year-Round Giving: Collected pull tabs are donated to the Ronald McDonald "House that Love Built," supporting families with seriously ill children. Zion recycles computer ink cartridges to support office supplies for Sunny Hill Preschool and Zion. Pull tabs and used ink cartridges may be dropped off at the church on Sunday morning, or by calling the church office.

For more information about any church activities, or if you are in need of pastoral assistance, call 860-342-2860, email zion.lutheran@snet.net, or visit zionlutheranportland.org.

Interfaith 'Giving & Thanks' Gathering

Neighbors from Portland and surrounding communities are invited by the Interfaith Coalition of Portland to its annual "Giving & Thanks" gathering. This year it will be held on Sunday, Nov. 22, at 2 p.m. This time, the host will be the First Congregational Church, 554 Main Street, Portland.

The afternoon will feature music and prayers from Christian, Baha'i, Jewish, local Native American, Universalist Unitarian, Muslim and Hindu communities.

Attendees will also hear stories of hope from Gilead Community Services, which serves individuals in Portland, Middletown and surrounding communities who are experiencing mental health and substance use challenges. All who attend are encouraged to bring a donation to support these neighbors in need.

Donations that are needed include socks, combs and brushes, toothpaste and toothbrushes, fragrance-free deodorant, grocery store gift cards, coloring books and pencils, and journals plus nice pens. Also, to support the work that Gilead does, a free-will offering will be collected during this event.

Refreshments and conversation will follow the prayers and songs. All are welcome.

Turkey Shoot

Portland Fish and Game Club will hold its annual Turkey Shoot Sunday, Nov. 22, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., across from the Exchange Club Fairgrounds.

This is a perfect opportunity to have some fun and maybe take home your Thanksgiving turkey.

Cost is $3 for one shot or two for $5. Food and drinks will be available. Families are welcome.

Bereavement Support Group

St. Mary Church, located at 45 Freestone Ave., invites all to attend the Bereavement Support Group.

The evening session meets the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m., in the church hall, and the afternoon session meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 2 p.m. – also in the church hall.

Call Susan Bongiorno to register at 860-685-1966.

Trinity Church News

Trinity Episcopal Church, 345 Main St., invites the community to worship each week. Services are on Sundays at 9:30 a.m., and Bible Study starts at 8:30 a.m. each Sunday.

Trinity is open for prayer and meditation and the church office is open from 2-4 p.m. each Friday. All are invited to join the Anglican Prayer beading sessions at this time as well.

Check out www.trinitychurchportlandct.org for more information. If you have any prayer requests to lift up, email the church office at trinitychurchportlandct@gmail.com.

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7-3-2025

Festival of Wreaths to Return

The Portland Historical Society's annual Festival of Wreaths – "Jingle & Mingle" will retu8rn the weekend of Dec. 5 and 6 at the Grange Hall on Sage Hollow Road.

Individuals, families, businesses, clubs and organizations are invited to donate a decorated wreath for this raffle. Wreaths can be real or artificial, can be a size and shape of your choice and can even be made from other materials – such as shells, pinecones, scrapbook papers, candies. It can have a theme if wanted. A gift card or certificate for a service can be attached as part of your decoration.

All wreaths should be pre-registered by Thursday, Dec. 3, by sending an email to PortlandCThistory@gmail.com.

If you would like to participate but don't have time to create a wreath, for a donation of $30 a Historical Society "elf" will decorate one for you. Your name, business or organization will be listed as the donor. Email PortlandCThistory@gmail.com to make arrangements for a society elf to "work" for you. If you prefer to make a financial donation, your name will be posted as a supporter during the event.

The Festival of Wreaths will be back at the Grange Hall for the third year — located at 17 Sage Hollow Road. All decorations must be dropped off by their creators on Thursday, Dec. 3, or Friday, Dec. 4. The festival will be open for the public on Saturday and Sun-day from noon to 4 pm at the Grange Hall. On Saturday, Dec. 5, at 3 p.m, the Portland High School A Capella Group, under the direction of Samuel Tucker, will perform holiday songs.

All proceeds from this event will be used to further the society's mission to preserve Portland's history and to fund educational projects for the community.

Portland Library News & Notes

Portland Library, 20 Freestone Ave., has announced the following events. **Registration is required for all programs unless noted.** To register and for full program descriptions, visit the calendar of events at www.portlandlibraryct.org. or call 860-342-6770. The library is also on Facebook and Instagram.

Hours: Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m., - Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., - Saturday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. **Holiday Closings:** For the Thanksgiving holiday, the library will close Wednesday, Nov. 25, at 5 p.m., and will be closed all day on Thursday, Nov. 26, and Friday, Nov. 27.

Inclement Weather Protocol: Portland Library adheres to the following weather procedure in regards to its scheduled programs: If Portland Public Schools have a delayed opening or are closed for the day due to inclement weather, the library will not run morning storytimes. Afternoon and evening programs will be decided on an individual basis that day, and registered participants will be contacted through email as soon as possible if the program will be canceled. Call the library at 860-342-6770 if you have any questions on whether a program will be held.

Children's Programs: Late Fall Storytimes: Begin the week of Nov. 16; registration is required and is open now. **Preschool Storytimes (Ages 3-5):** Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. Nov. 17-Dec. 8.

Drop-In Crafting: Thursday, Nov. 19, 3:30 p.m. Kids in grades K-6 are invited to come for some no-rules creative crafting in the Wagner Room. Supplies provided. This is a drop-in program and no registration is required.

Thanksgiving Week Activities. Thanksgiving Centerpieces: Tuesday, Nov. 24, 1:30 p.m., for grades K-5. After a half day of school, drop in to make a small fall flower decoration for Thanksgiving. Add a little tag to your creation saying what you are thankful for. No registration required. **Special Family Film:** Wednesday, Nov. 25, 1 p.m. *Toy Story 5* (2026; rated PG) will be shown. Run time is 102 minutes.

Teen Program: Teen Advisory Group: Monday, Nov. 16, 3:30 p.m. Grades 6 and up are invited to come help plan programs and pick out materials for the library. No registration required. Snacks will be provided.

Adult Programs: Invisible No More: Wangunk Artists Reception: Saturday, Nov. 14, 1 p.m. This reception celebrates the exhibition of Wangunk Elder Gary "Red Oak" O'Neil's ceramics, alongside a display of other contemporary Wangunk works curated by him. Learn about the original caretakers of Portland as you trace connections between family, land, memory, and cultural preservation. The pottery exhibit will be in the display cases in the Portland Library through Nov. 19. The art exhibit will run in the Mary Flood Room through Dec. 7.

Book Clubs: Mystery Lovers Book Club: Tuesday, Nov. 17, 1 p.m. "A Traitor in Whitehall" by Julia Kelly will be discussed. **Talk About Books:** Tuesday, Dec. 1, 1 p.m. "Art Thief" by Michael Finkel will be discussed. **1st Thursday Night Book Club:** Thursday, Dec 3, 6:30 p.m. "The Mother-in-Law" by Sally Hepworth will be discussed.

Senior Center News & Notes

The Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Avenue, announces the following. **Registration is required for all programs** unless noted; for more information or to register, call 860-342-6761. Senior center hours are Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Friday, 9 a.m. to noon. Visit www.portlandct.org/senior-services for more information, including a calendar of events.

Food Bank: Open at the senior center on Mondays and Thursdays from 9 a.m.-noon. Donations welcome, but please only leave donations during Food Bank hours.

Mobile Food Pantry: The Food Share Mobile Pantry comes to the Food Bank every other Monday. The next Mobile Pantry date is Nov. 16.

Weekly Programs: Monday, 11/16: Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Tuesday, 11/17: Watercolor Painting Class with Bivenne Staiger, 9:30 a.m. to noon. Payment to instructor. Contact bivenne@yahoo.com for more information; **Congregate Meal, noon.** Menu: sliced turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, stuffing, roll and butter, milk, cranberry sauce; **Coupons for Troops,** 1-4 p.m.; **Setback,** 1 p.m.; **SyncoCize,** 5-6 p.m., fee is donation to instructor.

Wednesday, 11/18: Light Aerobics, 9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.; **Chair Yoga with Gia,** 10:30 a.m., cost is $5 donation to instructor; **Fiber Arts Group,** noon.

Thursday, 11/19: Seated Stretch & Tone, 9:30 a.m.; **Knit & Stitch,** 10 a.m.; **Congregate Meal,** noon – $3 suggested donation (must fill out form). Menu: meatloaf with gravy, roll and butter, peas and carrots, smashed potatoes, milk, fruit cup; **Mah Jongg,** 12:30 p.m.; **Scrabble,** 1 p.m.

Friday, 11/20: Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.; **Chair Yoga with Gia,** 10:30 a.m., $5 donation to instructor.

Special Events: Unless noted, **registration is required for all programs**. Also, unless noted, all programs are free.

Monday, Nov. 16: Veterans' Benefits Workshop, 10 a.m. to noon. There will be on-site support, information on VA benefits, and community connections.

Monday, Nov. 16: Cooking for One with Chef Marilyn McGrath 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Enhance your cooking skills, enjoy social interaction, learn how to maximize food budget and learn how to reduce food waste. Class will make roasted shrimp, baked stuffed mushrooms and a baked brie. Don't forget to bring a take-home container. Space is limited. Class cost: $10.

Monday, Nov. 16: A Veterans Day Salute: Coffee, Camaraderie & Country, 2 p.m. Enjoy coffee and pastries as you celebrate local veterans and express appreciation for their services and sacrifice. There will be a performance by the For Fun Duo. All are welcome.

Wednesday, Nov. 18: Shopping Trip to Middletown, 2:30-5:30 p.m. Visit Stop & Shop, Marshall's and Dollar Tree. There is a $5 ride fee.

Monday, Nov. 23: Drumming Circle, 2-3 p.m. This is a way to connect, relieve stress, and try something different in a group setting. No experience needed and instruments will be provided. $5 Donation goes to the Food Bank.

Monday, Nov. 23: Lunch & Learn: Living Trusts: A Stage of Preparedness, 11:30 a.m. Learn about how a living trust can prepare an individual by managing, protecting, and transferring their assets, before and after death. Hosted by American Senior Benefits.

Tuesday, Nov. 24: Bushnell Backstage Tour, 10 a.m. Experience Mortensen Hall; marvel at the luxuriousness of the Belding Theater, gaze at the 14-foot sparkling Chihuly 'Ode to Joy' blown glass artwork; and view a variety of backstage areas rarely seen by the public – including the famous autograph room and the stars' Green Room.

Medical Rides: The center offers ADA-accessible transportation for seniors to medical rides, on a first-come, first-served basis. The fee is $5/person, round trip. Please give at least a two-week notice.

Foot Care: The center is taking appointments for a Foot Clinic with Stacey Cormier, RN; services starting at $35. Call to register and for more information.

Massage by Joan: Thursdays and Fridays, by appointment only. Call Joan at 860-301-6507.

Hair by Jessica: By appointment only. Call Jessica at 860-751-9215.

Body Recovered After Arrigoni Bridge Jump

By Anne Lilburn

The body of a person who jumped from the Arrigoni Bridge in the early hours of Friday, Nov. 6 was found Sunday morning, Nov. 8, by the Middletown Police Department's Dive Team, who were working with Portland Police Officer Paul Liseo, according to Portland Police.

Portland Police initially responded at 12:31 a.m. early Friday morning to reports of a person who had scaled the sidewalk fencing and jumped into the Connecticut River. Both Middletown and Portland Police began search operations, which according to Portland Police included police and fire dive teams, drone coverage, spot teams from the bridge deck and canine teams along the shoreline.

Eventually, the victim's body was located around 10 a.m. on Sunday morning. Portland Police commended the work of both departments.

"The Dive Team worked tirelessly since the initial report of a jumper from the Arrigoni Bridge," they wrote in a press release. "It was only through their dedication, knowledge, and commitment that they were able to identify the location of the body."

"The Portland Police Department would like to extend a sincere thank you to Middletown Police Chief Erik Costa for the department's support tin granting the request for mutual aid though the dive team from the onset of the incident. We also would like to thank Captain Aura Smith for her involvement working with the victim's family and coordinating the deployment of the dive team."

The victim's name had not been publicly released as of press time.

Holiday Craft and Vendor Show

The Trinity Church Holiday Craft and Vendor Show is planned for Saturday, Nov. 21, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at 345 Main St.

There will be a large assortment of Thanksgiving and Christmas Crafts, Baked Goods, Vintage Christmas items, scarves and "Crown Jewels" provided by Trinity Crafting Commandos and Bakers.

Vendors will include crafts, jewelry, Connecticut-made food items, ornaments, homemade children's clothes, nursery décor, crochet items, gift items, soaps, candles, book items, canvas art, decoupage, handmade baby items, fabric toys, table runners, insulated casserole totes, ID holders and more.

A Musical Holiday Celebration

The Middlesex Hospital Vocal Chords will present its 36th annual winter concert, entitled "A Musical Holiday Celebration," on Sunday, Dec. 6, at 2 p.m., at Portland High School, 95 High St.

Samuel Tucker, musical director, along with Alan Dougherty, accompanist, have arranged a varied program. Along with favorite traditional carols, some selections include Beethoven's "Hallelujah", the "Little Drummer Boy," "It's Beginning to Look a Lot like Christmas," "What Child is This," "Sleigh Ride" and "Mele Kalikimaka."

Tickets are $25; call 860-347-2787 or visit vocalchords20.org for more information. Like the Vocal Chords on Facebook and Instagram.

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From the First Selectman's Desk

It's been an exceptionally busy fall here in Portland, with significant progress on several major town projects, new economic development, important discussions about public safety, and community events that remind us why Portland is such a special place to call home.

I'd like to share some updates, recognize the people making a difference, and address a few issues that deserve our attention.

A Strong Showing at the Polls: First, thank you to the 4,577 Portland residents who participated in the Nov. 3rd election. With 65.88% of our 6,947 registered voters casting ballots, Portland experienced record turnout for a non-presidential election.

I also congratulate everyone who stepped forward as a candidate. Having participated in a number of elections over many years, I understand the challenges of running for public office, but I also know the tremendous personal rewards that come from serving your community.

Special thanks to Town Clerk Michael Tierney and our entire election team for their exceptional work throughout early voting and Election Day.

Community Traditions and Giving Back: Our annual Halloween on Main Street celebration on October 30th was among the most successful we've ever hosted. Perfect weather, tremendous attendance, and new traffic restrictions helped create what I believe was our safest event yet.

My thanks to Youth Services, Parks and Recreation, participating businesses, vendors, volunteers, and families for making this event so special. I also continued my own tradition of breaking boards for the children, something I've enjoyed doing for more than a dozen years!

This past Wednesday, Nov. 11th, we also had the opportunity to honor our veterans at the annual Veterans Dinner at Portland High School. This wonderful tradition, supported for many years by Sebby Melilli and his family, is especially meaningful to me. I've had the pleasure of serving as DJ for the past two years, and seeing so many of our veterans come together reminds me just how important it is that we continue recognizing their service and sacrifices.

Among those veterans is my longtime karate instructor and Sensei, Marine and Vietnam veteran Nicholas A.J. Cordone. It's a privilege to know so many of these remarkable individuals personally, and I hope we never take for granted what they've done for our country.

Our annual Thanksgiving Food Drive is also underway, with collection taking place this Sunday, Nov. 15, beginning at 1 p.m., rain or shine! More than 2,000 collection bags were distributed throughout Portland last weekend. If you received one, please consider filling it with nonperishable food items and having it ready for pickup Sunday afternoon.

This effort was especially important to Shaun Manning, and continuing it honors his commitment to helping others. The need is significant. Our Food Bank reports a 65% increase in usage this year, a reminder that many of our neighbors are facing difficult times.

If you didn't receive a bag, donations can also be brought directly to the Food Bank at the Senior Center. Volunteers are also needed Sunday to help unload and sort donations.

A special thank you to Kim and everyone helping keep this important tradition going strong. Portland has always been a community that takes care of its own, and I'm confident we'll step up again this year!

School Building Project Moving Forward: Our School Building Committee continues making substantial progress on the voter-approved school renovation project, one of the most significant investments in Portland's history.

Meeting weekly, the committee recently selected STV as the project's Owner's Project Manager from eight submissions. The OPM will coordinate closely with the committee, architects, contractors, and other professionals to oversee project scheduling, costs, and construction.

An architectural firm has also been selected, with a formal announcement expected shortly. The next step will be selecting the construction contractor for the first school.

The project remains on schedule, and expenditures to date are within budget.

I want to recognize Chairman Jim Tripp, the nine regular committee members, and two alternates for their dedication and commitment to this important work.

Charter Revision and Public Participation: Portland's newly-established Charter Revision Commission has begun reviewing the Town Charter, which establishes the structure and operating framework of our local government.

The commission will examine opportunities to improve how Portland conducts its business and will seek input from residents throughout the process. The commission scheduled its first public hearing for Thursday, Nov. 12, at the Portland Senior Center, providing an initial opportunity for residents to offer suggestions and share their thoughts about how our town government operates.

There will be additional opportunities for public participation in the months ahead, and I strongly encourage residents to get involved. Our goal is to present proposed charter changes to voters during the November 2027 municipal election.

Main Street Safety and Traffic Improvements: Improving safety along Main Street continues to be an important community discussion. Main Street serves pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and businesses, and finding the appropriate balance among those needs is essential.

One concept under consideration is a roadway redesign, sometimes called a "road diet." Potential improvements include converting sections of the roadway from four lanes to three, improving pedestrian crossings, adjusting parking configurations, adding signage, and increasing traffic enforcement.

Because Main Street is a state highway, significant modifications would require coordination with the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

These ideas have been discussed through Portland's Plan of Conservation and Development process and ongoing Brownfield Area-Wide Revitalization planning.

I believe improvements are necessary, but any proposed changes should be carefully evaluated with meaningful input from residents and businesses. I encourage everyone interested in this issue to participate in future discussions.

High Street Water Main Replacement: The ongoing High Street water main replacement project, being completed by DeRita Construction of Middletown, has generally progressed well.

However, a recent construction-related incident affected water pressure for several households, and residents were not properly notified. I want to personally apologize to those affected.

After learning of the situation, I reviewed the incident with our Public Works team and directed changes to our communication procedures to reduce the likelihood of similar problems occurring again.

Infrastructure improvements can create temporary inconveniences, but residents deserve timely, accurate information when services may be disrupted. We recognize where we fell short and are taking steps to improve.

Economic Development and New Opportunities: One of Portland's most exciting new developments, Yora Nordic Spa, is nearing completion.

I've visited the site several times recently and have been impressed by the facility and the progress being made. More than 50 employees have already been hired, including many Portland residents, and an official opening announcement is expected soon.

The project represents a major private investment in our community, generating employment opportunities, tax revenue, and the potential to attract visitors from across New England.

We're also hosting a Portland Business Meet & Greet on Monday, Nov. 23, from 6 to 8 p.m., at Brainerd Place. Local business owners are encouraged to attend, meet their neighbors, and hear updates about ongoing development and town initiatives. For information or to attend, please contact Town Planner Dan Bourret at dbourret@portlandct.org.

Riverfront Recreation and Farmers Markets: Portland River Bend Landing, located at 241 Airline Ave., continues to improve.

Approximately six picnic tables, additional riverside benches, and more than a dozen trees and shrubs have recently been installed. More enhancements are planned as we continue developing this wonderful recreational asset along the Connecticut River.

I'm also pleased to recognize Ann Buchanan Randall and Emily Demaio for helping bring farmers markets back to Portland. Although modest in size this first year, the markets received enthusiastic feedback from vendors and residents. We look forward to building on that success with an expanded program in 2027.

A Reminder About Roadway Safety: Finally, several traffic signs, including a stop sign and street-name signs, have recently been stolen. Missing signs present real safety concerns, particularly at intersections. Residents who notice missing or damaged signs should contact the Public Works Department immediately at 860-342-6733.

Looking Ahead: Portland continues to move forward on many fronts, from school renovations and infrastructure investments to new businesses, recreation, and community engagement. These efforts are possible because of the dedicated employees, volunteers, elected officials, business owners, and residents who contribute their time and talents to our town.

I remain committed to keeping residents informed, acknowledging challenges when they arise, and working collaboratively to make Portland an even better community.

As always, I welcome your questions, suggestions, and ideas.

Mike Pelton
Portland First Selectman



The Portland Garden Club is taking preorders for its hand-greened holiday cemetery boxes. The club is only accepting preorders this year. Club members are pictured here with boxes at a previous sale.

Preorders Accepted for Holiday Cemetery Boxes

The Portland Garden Club is now accepting preorders for its hand-greened holiday cemetery boxes.

The boxes are made by club members using an assortment of fresh, winter evergreens. Pricing for large boxes is $20 each and small boxes is $15 each. Order deadline is Monday, Nov. 30. Pick-up is on Saturday, Dec. 5, from 9-11 a.m., at the greenhouse located in the back of the Portland High School, 95 High St. Also for sale will be white birch candle logs and smaller holiday decorated planters.

Purchases help the club support community activities and fund its educational programs throughout the year. To order, call 959-231-9630.

Library in Laptop Program

Portland Public Library is participating in the Laptop ConneCT Program. The program is designed to help users bridge the digital gap, and will allow participants to work, learn, and connect from home.

To be eligible, the patron must be at least 18 years old, have a valid Portland Public Library card in good standing, and be a current participant in a qualifying state or federal assistance program (SNAP, CEAP, LIHEAP, Medicare, or HUSKY Health).

Applications to participate are available at www.portlandlibraryct.org or by calling or stopping by the library, located at 20 Freestone Ave., during its open hours: Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.; and Saturday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

For more information, call the library at 860-342-6700 or email portlandlibrary@portlandct.org.

First Congregational Church News

All are welcome to First Congregational Church, 554 Main St., for worship each Sunday. This week's sermon title is "Hope Does Not Need Optimism."

Sunday Worship: Worship starts at 10 a.m. Fellowship Hour to follow.

Sunday School: For children ages K-8th grade. This fall, kids will follow the story of Moses – from his rescue as a baby to the journey toward freedom. Children will explore Bible stories through hands-on activities.

Red Cross Blood Drive: Friday, Nov. 13, noon-5 p.m. Donors are encouraged to register in advance at redcrossblood.org to find a convenient donation time. The church holds this blood drive every year on the Friday closest to Veterans Day.

Spiritual Group: All are invited to join the Rev. Judith Meyers on the first Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. (October – April) for a time of conversation, reflection, support, and spiritual exploration. Each month, you'll consider a different question or theme as you listen to one another and reflect on where God is at work in your lives. No preparation or special knowledge is needed.

Year-Round Giving: Neighbors in Need collects donations for the Portland Food Bank. Items needed are Spam, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, Bisquick, canned tomato products, baked beans, quick oats, and boil-in-a-bag rice.

Nursery School: First Church Nursery School offers school for 4-year-olds on Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., and for 3-year-olds on Tuesday/Thursday from 9 a.m.-noon. Contact Amy Jahnke at 1stchurchnurseryschool@gmail.com for costs and more information.

For more information about church services or activities, go to firstchurchportlandct.org or call 860-342-3244.

Winter Used Coat Drive

Winter coats are in great need for the Portland Food Bank closet. Used coat coordinator for the Portland Food Bank, Mike Melluzzo, has asked the local Knights of Columbus to again sponsor and run a townwide used Coat Drive this fall.

David Shovlin, committee chair, said, "We will ask for used coats and I know the response will be very generous, as it was in prior years."

For donations, a large receptacle will be available in the Rosary Room at the Church of Saint Mary at 45 Freestone Ave for the much-needed donated coats.

Council 7 is also a major supporter of the regional Coats for Kids event sponsored by the area Councils Knights held annually on Black Friday in Middletown.

Board of Selectmen Reviews POCD

By Anne Lilburn

Portland's Board of Selectmen met on Nov. 4 for a regularly scheduled meeting, where they heard a presentation about the town's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) revision, passed a resolution to join the Connecticut Municipal Development Authority (CMDA), and discussed ongoing public works projects and needed facilities upgrades.

First Selectman Mike Pelton, a Republican, started the meeting by noting the town's recent election. He remarked that Portland saw record voter turnout for a non-presidential election year, with 4,577 voters voting, or 65.88% of the voting population. Roughly 1,700 people cast their votes ahead of time in early voting, he said.

Presentation on POCD Revision

The board next heard from Town Planner Dan Bourret and consultant Jeremy DeCarli from Tyche Planning and Policy Group. DeCarli explained the role of the POCD, a state-mandated planning and land use document that is required by law to be revised every 10 years. Portland's was last revised in 2016 and recently underwent the revision process.

DeCarli described the POCD as "a strategic and comprehensive document that provides guidance for the future growth and development of a municipality as it makes decisions about land purchases, infrastructure investments and zoning changes."

He emphasized the role of public input in developing the POCD and said that the town's Planning and Zoning Commission would rely on the document to inform its planning decisions and any zoning changes, and that the document would also impact the town's ability to obtain state funding for projects, as the state considers whether applications are in accordance with the town's POCD.

DeCarli said that the town's surveys and community input sessions had identified strengths that residents valued in the town, such as a "strong small-town identity," natural resources and open space and schools, as well as concerns that residents had about the downtown district, limited local amenities, overdevelopment, transportation and walkability, traffic, and affordability.

DeCarli said the document set goals around revitalizing and redeveloping downtown, Main Street and the riverfront, growing recreation and community programs, preserving open space, addressing future housing needs and encouraging "thoughtful" economic development. His presentation laid out recommendations for guiding appropriate development, protecting open space and farmland, making transportation improvements and appropriately expanding infrastructure, including sewer and water.

One suggested "action item" that was proposed to achieve those goals involved expanding the downtown district and establishing a design review board to review projects proposed for that downtown area. That generated some controversy and discussion from the board.

Selectman Bobby Hetrick, a Republican, took issue with that suggestion, arguing that existing regulations governing projects in the downtown area had slowed the area's revitalization.

"The guidelines that they use now for the Village District is why we have so many empty storefronts," said Hetrick. "Because they have to jump through so many hoops just to open their business and make sure the building's the right color and the awning's the right size. That's the worst thing we ever adopted, was the guidelines for the Village District. There is no Village District. That's gonna make it even worse."

DeCarli said that he had not heard that before, but that he had heard from PZC members that the guidelines were "too subjective" and not clear enough, so that someone looking to open a business didn't know how to proceed. Bourret seemed to agree.

When asked by Hetrick as to why the downtown district should be any different from the rest of the commercial district, Bourret said that the district designation was an attempt to address community concerns about blight. He said that the town did not require specific awning sizes and did not charge a fee to review color choices, as Hetrick had heard.

Selectman Dave Kuzminksi, a Democrat who owns a business on Main Street, said he agreed with Hetrick that the design guidelines were onerous, saying he had been at the same location for 41 years and charged $350 for a design review that ended with him being told that he had to remove a neon sign that had long been part of his business.

Bourret pointed out that these types of regulations were put in place to prevent situations like some in the past where buildings were painted in loud striped patterns and in other ways. He suggested that the town seek to revise its guidelines and fee structures so that costs would not be excessive for businesses.

Committee and Department Updates

The board also heard from America 250 Committee Chair Terry Grady, who provided updates on what the committee had accomplished so far and asked for the charter to be extended through the end of the fiscal year to allow the committee to complete its commemorative booklet and include events throughout the entire year.

The board approved his request unanimously, and Grady noted that this would not result in any additional costs or fiscal changes since it would align with the current fiscal year.

Board member Jim Tripp, a Democrat, provided an update from the school building committee, saying that they had chosen an architectural firm for the Valley View construction project, and the board voted to approve entering into that contract with Friar Architecture.

Public Works Director Jason Morocco provided an update as well on the town's water main, paving and sidewalk projects, noting that the approaching winter meant that some projects would soon be put on hold until spring. He also addressed concerns that selectmen had expressed about sewer plant capacity, noting that the plant was badly in need of upgrades and repairs for failing systems.

Morocco estimated that costs to replace the plant's UV system likely would be "in the millions" and said that they needed to find a temporary fix at minimum prior to the summer in order to avoid getting fined by the state's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).

"Our backs are up against the wall with the sewer plant," he said. "It's been years and years of just Band-Aids and now things are starting to fail that we either can't get parts or find vendors to repair them, or we're replacing parts on a weekly and yearly basis that should last years."

Morocco invited board members to stop by the plant to see the current state of the plant and understand what upgrades are needed.

On a better note, he said that work was proceeding on the new town well, and that projections for that project remained good. He also said there were some promising state and USDA grant applications that may yield funding, including some that could cover some of the costs associated with repairs at the sewer plant.

Selectmen Vote to Join CMDA

The board also voted unanimously to join the state's municipal development authority (CMDA), a state organization whose website describes it as "a quasi-public organization that works with towns and cities to increase housing production in neighborhoods that are mixed-use, walkable and well-served by transit."

The organization specializes in "facilitating the development of vibrant downtowns near transit hubs, fostering sustainable and equitable communities across the state."

The board previously heard a presentation from the authority's executive director at a recent meeting. Voting to be a member town does not remove regulatory or zoning authority from the town, but participating does open up funding opportunities.

The Board of Selectmen meets next for a regularly scheduled meeting on Nov. 18.

Public School Preschool Screening

Connecticut public schools are responsible for identifying children who are eligible to receive special education services. Valley View School in Portland will conduct a preschool screening on Friday, Nov. 13, for children ages 3 to 4 years. The screening is designed to answer any questions or concerns about a child's development, as well as identify children who may be eligible for the preschool selection process.

During the screening, your child will meet with members from our preschool team and participate in a variety of activities. These activities assess different developmental areas including cognition, communication, fine and gross motor skills, and social interaction. During this time, the parent/caregiver will meet with another member of the team to discuss your child's adaptive and personal social skills.

Following the screening, you will receive a letter stating your child's result.

In order for your child to attend Valley View's preschool program, they must participate in the screening process. Peer role models are determined on a year-to-year basis.

For more information and to schedule an appointment, call Valley View School at 860-342-3131.

Crafters, Vendors Wanted

Crafters and vendors are sought for the Holiday Craft & Vendor Show coming up Saturday, Nov. 21, at Trinity Church, 345 Main St. The show will be held in the parish hall.

Space is available for $20, and space is limited. For more information and a registration form, email carol.hill@comcast.net.

Air Line Trail Volunteers Wanted

Portland's Air Line Trail Committee has been in operation for 12 years – and there is a need to recruit new members to serve on the committee or subcommittee for trail maintenance.

If you would like to join this group of hikers, email Lou Pear at louisjpear@gmail.com.

Toys for Tots

The Town of Portland Garage is assisting the U.S. Marines in its annual Toys for Tots campaign, which runs through Dec. 15.

All are asked to donate new, unwrapped toys to children in need. The donation location is the Town Garage, 505 Glastonbury Tpke.

Food Drive Reminder

This is a reminder to Portland residents that grocery bags in the 32nd annual food drive to benefit Portland Food Bank will be picked up Sunday, Nov. 15.

For more information or to volunteer, call Kelly Mainetti at 860-685-1985.

From the Committee on Solidarity

In the month of November we are encouraged to learn about and understand several communities. We have Homelessness Awareness Month, Trans Day of Remembrance and Native American Heritage Month.

Several groups, such as the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, the United Way, and the state's Housing and Homeless Services Unit, have been working to raise awareness and to end homelessness in our state. Statistics show that since 2022 the homeless rate has risen 41% in our state. If you are homeless or in a housing emergency, by calling 2-1-1 you will be connected to a specialist trained to help. The state's Coordinated Access Network works with local groups to provide services close to you. Veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Connecticut can access immediate help and supportive resources through VA Connecticut Health Care by contacting the Homeless Veterans Care Coordinator at 203-932-5711, ext. 11331.

On Friday, Nov. 20, Trans Day of Remembrance, we honor transgender, non-binary, and gender-nonconforming individuals lost to anti-transgender violence and systemic harm. Remembrance kits are available to pick up at the Portland Library on Nov. 16th after 5:30 p.m. Anyone is welcome to pick up a vigil kit. The kits contain a candle and information card about Transgender Day of Remembrance and where to find the list of lives in Remembrance so far in 2026.

For Native American Heritage Month, the Brownstone Quorum, the Portland Historical Society, the America 250 Committee, and the Portland Library presented a series of events with speakers and displays about the Wangunk tribe. Professor Kathy Hermes gave a talk on the Wangunk of Middlesex County. Gary Red Oak O'Neil, a local descendant of the Wangunk, gave a talk at the Waverly Center about his experience. He also hosted two events featuring Wangunk art titled "Invisible No More: Wangunk Artists." The last event is a reception at the Portland Library on Nov. 14 at 1 p.m. and features the exhibition of his ceramics with a display of other contemporary Wangunk works. The pottery exhibit is displayed in the Portland Library until November 19th. The art exhibit will be in the Mary Flood room through Dec. 7.

The Brownstone Quorum has created a lasting memorial to the Wangunk people whose name translates to "People at the Bend in the River." The bronze plaque dedicated to our town's Wangunks will be displayed at a scenic location overlooking the river. The plaque will be on top of a thick slab of granite with a domed shape symbolizing the round houses or "wigwams." The bottom will be a brownstone block symbolizing Mother Earth with a longer block on top, symbolizing the Trail of Life.

We commend Portland voters for the record-breaking numbers that came out to exercise their voting rights on Nov. 3. We welcome the public to join us for our monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. You can join us either in person at the Waverly Senior Center or online at www.portlandct.org/zoom, Zoom B (ID: 352 700 8408, password: 113ct).

Agendas, minutes, and general information can be found at portlandct.org/solidarity-taskforce. If you are interested in the committee, you do not have to be a member to participate! To learn more about the committee and its workgroups, email portlandctsolidarity@gmail.com.

Portland Committee on Solidarity









Three coaches and two former athletes were officially inducted into the East Hampton Athletic Hall of Fame during a recent ceremony. From left are Eric Peck, Patrick Rubega, Gyanna Russell, Scott Wosleger and Parker Strong.

Five Inducted to Athletic HOF

The East Hampton Athletic Hall of Fame celebrated its 20th anniversary on Oct. 23 at Blackledge Country Club in Hebron by inducting three coaches and two former athletes.

Honorees were Eric Peck (Class of 2008), a star baseball player and winning pitcher of East Hampton High School's first-ever Shoreline Championship team; Patrick Rubega, a longtime volunteer track & field assistant coach who coached over 20 state champions; Gyanna Russell (Class of 2017), a star record-setting basketball player; Scott Wosleger, who coached baseball for many years and won three conferences and one state championship; and Parker Strong, who is the second-winningest boys' basketball coach and his 2018 team won a record 25 games in a row.

With the inductions, the Hall of Fame now has inducted 69 former athletes, coaches, teams, or contributors since 2006.

Nominations are open for 2027. Email seidlt@sbcglobal.net to request a nomination packet or visit www.ehahof.wixsite.com. Also contact the Hall of Fame if you wish to join the association as a committee member.

Tie a Yellow Ribbon

The East Hampton Yellow Ribbon Tree committee invites all East Hampton families of military service members who are deployed oversees to participate in a special recognition program, which involves tying a yellow ribbon around a tree at their home.

Once the service member returns home from deployment, an official ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held in their honor.

For more information on this special program, call Ann McLaughlin at 860-267-2316.

St. Patrick Church News & Notes

St. Patrick Church, 47 West High St., is a member of St. John Paul II Parish, along with St. Bridget Church in Moodus.

Masses are celebrated Saturdays at 4 p.m. at St. Patrick and 5:30 p.m. at St. Bridget, and on Sundays at 7 and 11 a.m. at St. Bridget and 9 a.m. at St. Patrick.

During the week, Masses are celebrated at 8 a.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays at St. Patrick, and at 8 a.m. on Fridays at St. Bridget.

Confessions are Saturdays at 3 p.m. at St. Patrick and 6:30 p.m. at St. Bridget.

The parish website is www.sjpii.org.

Fabric Donations Welcome!

Haddam Neck Congregational Church is collecting donations of fabric, yarn and notions for the Bits and Pieces sale held during the church's annual Quilt Show in April.

For more information, call Melissa at 860-993-5311 or Darcy at 860-301-4994.

Local Art on Display

Two East Hampton Art Association members are presently displaying their art work locally until the end of November.

Betsy Rich has her oils at the East Hampton Public Library and the local Senior Center.

Also, the oils and watercolors on display at the Town Hall on the first floor belong to Betty Sennett.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church News

Services at Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, located at 1 East High St., are held Sundays at 10 a.m. There is Sunday school every week following the sermon.

The church sanctuary is handicapped-accessible by using the lift.

For more information, call 860-267-1248 or visit www.facebook.com/BethlehemEH or www.bethlehemeh.org.

Belltown Garden Club to Meet

On Monday, Nov. 23, the East Hampton Belltown Garden Club will meet at the East Hampton Public Library community room at 6:30 p.m., to create individual long-lasting centerpieces for your holiday table at home.

The club will provide special greens, florist foam,decorations and some informal instruction. You will bring your own 5-7" holiday container, such as a vase, small basket, tin, etc., nippers and scissors. There is a $5 registration fee.

Members of the public and prospective members of the club are invited to attend. The East Hampton Belltown Garden Club is a member of Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut and National Garden Clubs.

To ensure there are adequate supplies, call Sue Hewes to register or with questions 860-575-1349.

Young Actors Bring 'Shrek JR.' to the Stage

Somewhere far, far away… in the heart of East Hampton, a group of young actors is getting ready to bring the fairytale world of "Shrek JR." to life at Center School.

The performances will take place at the school Thursday, Nov. 19, at 7 p.m.; Friday, Nov. 20, at 7 p.m.; and Saturday, Nov. 21, at 6 p.m. Doors open 30 minutes before each performance, and concessions will be available.

Featuring students in grades 3–6, this production is packed with quirky fairytale characters and the over-the-top residents of Duloc.

These young performers at Center School have been rehearsing since the beginning of September.

Tickets are available in advance at chathamtheatercompany.org or at the door for $10. Seating is limited, and shows do sometimes sell out, so advance purchases are encouraged.

Senior Center News & Notes

East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., announces the following. **Senior center membership is required to register for all activivies and trips. Also, to register for programs visir** myactivecenter.com or contact the center at 860-267-4426 or seniorcenter@easthamptonct.gov. Senior center hours are Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Visit www.easthamptonct.gov/east-hampton-senior-center for more information and a full list of regular weekly and monthly activities, including games, quilting, Bible study, tap dance, and more. To join the senior center, just stop by and fill out some paperwork. Joining is free for East Hampton residents.

Holiday Closing: The senior center is closed on Wednesday, Nov. 11, in honor of Veterans Day.

Lunches: Served Monday through Friday, to ages 60 and up. Call to reserve a meal or sign up online. Reservations for the next day's meal are due by 10:30 a.m. the day before. Meals are free; a $3 donation is requested. A Form 5 document must be completed before registering for lunch; stop by the senior center to complete and submit the form.

Chatham Health Chat: Monday, Nov. 16, 11:30 a.m. A talk on micronutrients will be presented by the Chatham Health District. Register in advance.

Blood Pressure Screening: Monday, Nov. 16, 12:30 p.m. with the Chatham Health District.

Gift Shop Collaborative Meeting: Wednesday, Nov. 18, 10:30 a.m. Meet to discuss the upcoming Holiday Popup Gift Shop Sale and other business.

Purring Pottery Workshop: Wednesday, Nov. 18, 10:30 a.m. featuring a hands-on pottery wheel workshop at Colchester's Purring Pottery Studio. Learn basic wheel skills and choose a glaze for your piece. Participants provide their own transportation. Cost is $20. Participants drive to the event.

Short Story Discussion Group: Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2:30 p.m., featuring "The Dog of Pompeii" by Louis Untermeyer.

Let's Talk Mahjongg: Thursday, Nov. 19, 9:30 a.m. A simple overview of Mahjongg and the strategies behind the game. Register in advance.

Design & Create: Thursday, Nov. 19, 1:30 p.m. A different project is offered each session of this hands-on class.

Family Tree: Friday, Nov. 20, 10:30 a.m. Research your family tree with the help of group leader Kenneth Doney. Bring your laptop, iPad or cell phone to the session. Sign up in advance.

Drum Circle with Mark Zarillo: Friday, Nov. 20 at 2 p.m. Get ready to feel the rhythm through this interactive program that uses drums to create energizing beats and build a sense of community. No experience needed. Cost is $5.

Trips: Visit the New England Air Museum: Thursday, Nov. 19, departing at 9 a.m. Explore the museum's collection of restored aircraft from years past and learn the story of aviation and aerospace, with an emphasis on New England's role. Cost is $22 and includes admission and transportation.

Holiday Makers Market

All are invited to save the date for a Holiday Makers Market at Middle Haddam Public Library, 2 Knowles Rd., Middle Haddam, on Saturday, Dec. 12, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

The market will feature products by local artisans, including art, jewelry, pottery, woven blankets and kitchen towels, fabric hand bags, jams, scarves and textile art, greeting cards and more.

After the Dec. 12 opening day sale, products will be on display and available for purchase the following week through during library hours.

Call 860-267-9093 for more information.

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RE11-13-26



Graduates Basic Training!... **Parker Bear from East Hampton graduated Army Basic Training on Oct. 8 – which was also his 18th birthday. Family and friends joined in the celebration at Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C.**

Council Considers Development Moratorium

By Anne Lilburn

At the Town Council's Nov. 10 meeting, once again public comments were the main event – eventually leading the council to take steps towards recommending a development moratorium in the Lake Pocotopaug watershed.

The agenda for the night also had the council considering and approving items such as amendments to the Right to Farm ordinance, a revision of the Police Department's pursuit policy, and adjustments to language in the new WPCA ordinance.

Residents Push for Development Moratorium

More than a dozen people spoke at the meeting during public comment, urging the council to do what it could to impose a moratorium on new development, many of them outraged at current projects that they argued were potentially non-compliant with environmental best practices, with some alleging that development was proceeding without appropriate permits. One speaker described new construction with clear cut parcels, steep driveways that "dumped mud" into the road and no gravel to prevent runoff.

"Who is responsible for inspecting these construction sites?" she asked.

"This is not about an individual or land rights," said resident Bob Yenkner during public comment. "It's about protecting by rigorous regulation and enforcement our common resource, Lake Pocotopaug, and our environment from destruction, regardless of who the property owner may be."

Many said they feared that developers could take advantage of the town's current lack of staffing in the land use department, with the Town Planner position currently vacant and no additional staff available for enforcement actions.

Yenkner said that the town's new updated POCD, which has not been formally adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission yet, "incorporates modern best practices and environmental awareness, but until robust enforcement takes place, the environment in the lake will continue to suffer."

Several residents said that they had renovated their own homes to strict environmental standards, and questioned why developers, in their view, did not seem to be being held to those same standards.

Eric Rosenberg described the lake as the "most important resource in our town," and one of the few things that people in town agree on.

"I'm just asking you," he said to the council, "heartfelt as a citizen, to do what you can to make sure whatever building is done within the watershed is done in a way that preserves this natural resource now and into the future."

The comments from residents seemed to have an impact, with Jack Solomon, a Democrat, and Ted Hintz, a Republican, both asking Town Manager Dave Cox how the council could proceed to try to compel a moratorium on watershed development, at least until the town had a full-time planning official and a zoning enforcement officer hired. Both wondered about proper procedure, with Hintz in particular worrying that taking time for a legal notice posting, followed by public hearings and votes, would lead to a delay that would allow development to sneak in.

Cox said that the Planning and Zoning Commission, and not the Town Council, was the body that would have authority over that, because "they control land use." In order to impose a moratorium on development, they would have to modify the zoning code, Cox said.

Hintz said he understood, adding that "Planning and Zoning is one of the few bodies we don't have any control over."

"We have to work with Planning and Zoning, we can't just tell them what they have to do, because they can just not show up to a meeting and nothing's gonna get done," he said.

Eventually, the council agreed to ask Cox to talk with the Planning and Zoning Commission, including Chair Ray Zatorski, to try to get the commission to set a public hearing on the issue of a moratorium on development in the watershed area.

Council Honors Community Members, Sets Hearing on Ordinance

The council also conducted business listed on its planned agenda, including hearing from America 250 Committee Chair Kevin Reich, who listed off many of the 27 events and activities that the committee sponsored over the past year, including patriotic concerts, the Cabin Fever History Series presented by the library and the Chatham Historical Society, the Declaration of Independence Reading, the Light Up the Lake Event, the Middlesex County and Old Home Days Parade float, and the Bevin Bells hidden bells contest.

The council honored Kevin Burnham, Michael Scranton, James Burke, Shawn Webster, Gary "Red Oak" O'Neil, Kevin Reich, and Jack Solomon for their work with the America 250 festivities throughout the year.

The council also set a public hearing for Nov. 24 to consider an amended version of the town's Right to Farm Ordinance, and also approved revised language, which had been reviewed by the town attorney, for the town's new WPCA ordinance. That, too, will be considered at a public hearing on Nov. 24.

Police Updates

Also considered at this week's meeting were two matters relating to law enforcement. First, the council voted to approve a grant submission for the police department for a federal grant, the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant, that would provide the department with $6,000 in funds to be used for upgrades to the evidence room and for secure firearms storage. The item passed unanimously.

The council also considered and voted to approve a revision to the police department's general pursuit policy. Police Chief Dennis Woessner explained that the revision, which would allow for pursuits if someone was in a fleeing car and had participated in a violent crime, would bring the town into alignment with the statewide police standards.

Woessner said the revised policy would still maintain that pursuits are not allowed for property crimes, which he said he thought was "a good idea because the risks don't equal the rewards of that."

Cox also provided some updates for the council, ranging from good news (additional funding that will allow for completion of the gap in the Airline Trail via a boardwalk that will traverse wetlands) and not so good news (testing on the potential water source that the town was considering in Portland showed that it would not provide a sufficient water quantity). Cox said that construction on the Air Line Trail project should begin in spring once weather allows.

Breakfast with Santa

The East Hampton/Marlborough Rotary Club will hold its annual free Breakfast with Santa Saturday, Dec. 5, from 7:30-11 a.m., at the East Hampton High School cafeteria, located at 15 North Maple St.

Breakfast is completely free for everyone. Families are invited to enjoy a warm breakfast and a special visit with Santa Claus. Children will have the opportunity to have their picture taken with Santa.

Adding to the festivities, members of the East Hampton High School Interact Club will provide face-painting and other fun children's activities.

While there is no charge to attend, the Rotary Club encourages guests to bring non-perishable food items to benefit the East Hampton and Marlborough food banks. Monetary donations will also be accepted to support the food and fuel banks serving families in both communities.

All are welcome. For more information, call Ashley at 860-301-4517 or look for East Hampton/Marlborough Connecticut Rotary Club on Facebook.

Police News

10/31: Adam Anderson, 22, of East Hampton, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence and traveling unreasonably fast, East Hampton Police said.

11/3: Pursuant to an active warrant for his arrest, Lawrence Deschene, 50, of Mansfield was taken into custody and charged with making home improvements without a current certificate, police said.
11/6: Kathleen Jorinscay, 45, of Portland, turned herself in pursuant to an active warrant for her arrest and was charged with larceny of a motor vehicle/agricultural equipment, police said.

From Oct. 26-Nov. 8, officers responded to 30 medical calls, four motor vehicle crashes and 11 alarms, and made 21 traffic stops, police said.

Troop 57 Bottle Drive

Troop 57 is having its next bottle drive on Saturday, Nov. 21. Bring clean cans, plastics and glass to the American Distilling Parking lot (31 East High St., Route 66) from 9 a.m. to noon.

Since Connecticut charges a 10-cent deposit on soda, beer, water, tea, kombucha and juice, all of these clean containers can be dropped off. (The label may not specifically say Connecticut will pay the 10 cents, but if you paid a deposit, the scouts can take it.) However, Connecticut doesn't pay money for milk containers or dairy products, or wine and and hard liquor bottles, so those will not be accepted.

For more information, call Annette Kowalczyk at 860-267-2962.

Lions Present Free Concert

The East Hampton Lions invite the community to a free concert featuring Bill Naughton Jr. on Tuesday, Nov. 17, at 1 p.m., at the VFW on North Maple Street in East Hampton.

"Leave your money at home" is the invitation for this community event, which includes free refreshments and door prizes. Admission is free, and no reservations are needed.

For further information, call Lion Mary Krogh at 860-977-5760.

Food Drive at Church

Haddam Neck Congregational will hold a food drive to support local food banks on Saturday, Nov. 28, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the church, 408 Quarry Hill Rd. in Haddam Neck.

Drop off non-perishable food donations or grocery store gift cards to support our neighbors in need. Please be sure to check expiration dates.

Body Found Near Lake

East Hampton police reported that a body was found at Sears Park near the shore of Lake Pocotopaug last weekend.

A person walking in the park reported the body on Saturday, Nov. 7 around 6:43 a.m., according to police.

The deceased individual was identified as a white man in his 40s, and the situation was being investigated as an "untimely death," according to police, but no further information about the identity of the victim or the cause of death was available as of press time.

Recreation News

East Hampton Recreation has announced the following items of interest. For more information and to register, call 860-267-7300 or visit www.easthamptonrec.com.

Herbal and Salve Making: Thursday, Nov. 19, 6:30-8 p.m. Learn how to use herbs to create nourishing infused oils and healing salves. Cost is $35.

Christmas Wreath Workshop: Wednesday, Dec. 2, 4-5:30 p.m. and 6:30-8 p.m. Create your own custom wreath using fresh greenery, ribbons and decorative accents. Fresh wreath and decorative accents included. Cost is $40.

Solstice Fire Cider: Thursday, Dec. 17, 6:30-8 p.m. Explore aromatic herbs and spices as you create your own bold and flavorful blend. Cost is $35.





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REB-28-26

Artopia to Return

Epoch Arts will host its annual "Artopia" event on Sunday, Nov. 15, from 1-4 p.m., at Epoch, 27 Skinner St.

This is a free community event for the entire family that includes an all-ages art show, live music, live art demonstrations, kids crafts, adult hands-on art, vendors, food and more. There will be more than 17 vendors selling homemade soaps, weaving and fiber goods, award winning hot sauces, breads and baked goods, henna, jewelry, 3D-printed items, Christmas crafts and more.

If you're an artist and would like to share your artwork in the gallery – whether it be painting, drawing, printing, sculpture, photography, mixed media or another art form – contact Rachel at rachel@epocharts.org or visit www.epocharts.org. All ages are welcome to participate.

Nominations for Humanitarian of the Year

The East Hampton Lions Club is seeking nominations for its 2027 Humanitarian of the Year, who will be honored at the Lions District 23-C Annual Humanitarian Banquet on Jan. 19, 2027.

The deadline for nominations is fast approaching.

Each year, the East Hampton Lions recognize an individual who exemplifies compassion, generosity, and a strong commitment to serving others. The nominee must either live in East Hampton or have performed humanitarian acts that have made a meaningful impact within the East Hampton community.

Community members are invited to submit a one-page letter explaining why they believe their nominee deserves to be recognized as this year's Humanitarian of the Year.

Nomination letters should be mailed to: East Hampton Lions Club, P.O. Box 153, East Hampton, CT 06424

Letters should include the nominee's name, contact information, and a description of their contributions or service that demonstrate why they should be honored.

The deadline for submissions is Nov. 15.

For additional information, call Lion Mary Krogh at 860-977-5760.

Middle Haddam Public Library News

The Middle Haddam Public Library, 2 Knowles Road, Middle Haddam has announced the following. To register or for more information on any program, email middlehaddamlibrary@gmail.com, visit middlehaddamlibrary.com or call 860-267-9093. Mailing address: P.O. Box 123, Middle Haddam, CT 06456.

Library Hours: Mondays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Tuesdays and Fridays, 3-6 p.m.

Featured Artist for November: Steven Wells, a lifelong Portland resident and builder. Wells attended Paier College of Art and has taught watercolor classes for several years. His watercolors depict scenes of Portland and other favorite places in New England. His work can be viewed during regular library hours. An artist reception will be held Friday, Nov. 13, from 4-6 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

Chatham Chess Club: Wednesday, Nov. 18, from 6-9 p.m. All ages and skill levels welcome; lessons available. For more information, email pjhoffman1@juno.com.

Open Mic Night: Friday, Nov. 20, 6-8 p.m. Come and perform or just watch. Performers, call the library to sign up, at 860-267-9093.

Tree-Lighting and Carol-Singing: Friday, Dec. 4, at 5 p.m. All are welcome.

Holiday Party: Sunday, Dec. 6, 4:30-6:30 p.m. All are welcome. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share if you can.

Makers' Market: Saturday, Dec. 12, featuring local artisans. Makers will be on site that day, and many items may remain available to purchase at the library through Dec. 19.

Mahjong: Mondays, 10:30 a.m. All levels of experience welcome. Contact the library for more information.

Fiber Arts Group: Thursdays from 10 a.m.-noon. Bring your spinning wheel, knitting, weaving, embroidery, etc. All are welcome.

Chair Yoga Classes with Kathleen Marshall: Fridays from 9:30-10:30 a.m. Cost is $15 per class. This modified, gentle form of yoga that allows you to perform traditional yoga poses while seated in a chair or using a chair for standing support. Email zenlotus860@yahoo.com for information.

Yoga with Erin Day of Ten Summit Yoga: Mondays and Saturdays at 9 a.m., and Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Cost is a $17 drop-in fee. To register, email tensummitst@gmail.com or call 860-262-0246.

Congregational Church News

The Congregational Church of East Hampton, 59 Main St., welcomes all to worship Sundays at 10 a.m.

Members of CCEH continue reflection through the year on the theme, Psalm 46:1: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." The scripture reading for this Sunday's service is Matthew 25:14-30. The Rev. Robin Blundon will deliver the sermon. The Grateful Gathering will follow the worship service.

Weekly Schedule: Sunday evenings: AA meeting, 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall; Tuesday: Boy Scouts meeting, 5:30-8:30 p.m.; Wednesday: Art Class with Elizabeth Sennett, 9:30-11:30 a.m.; Thursday morning: Yarners, a community knitting/crocheting group, meets 10 a.m.-noon – all are welcome; Thursday evening: Choir Practice in the upstairs lounge – Bells from 6-7 p.m. and Vocal Choir from 7-8:30 p.m. – new members are always welcome!

Christmas Collection for DCF Clients: The church is collecting gift cards that will be given to children who receive services through DCF. Cards may be purchased through the RaiseRight program available through the church (order deadline is Nov. 22) or directly from a retailer.

East Hampton Food Bank: A weekly collection is held for the Food Bank.

Aluminum Food & Soda Can Tabs: Ongoing collection which will be donated to the Shriners Children's New England hospital in Springfield, Mass. Proceeds support childhood surgeries performed there, where no patient is charged a fee.

Women's Fellowship Dignity Drive: This is an ongoing collection to support women and girls in need, both globally and in the community. The church is also collecting feminine hygiene products for the local food bank and schools, as well as Church World Service.

For more information, visit cc-eh.org or call the office at 860-267-4959. Office hours are Monday and Wednesday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.



Bevin Bells has released special commemorative bell set celebrating Jimmy Stewart and the 80th anniversary of the holiday classic "It's a Wonderful Life."

Bevin Bells Releases New Jimmy Stewart-Themed Set

Bevin Bros. Manufacturing Company, America's last remaining exclusive bell manufacturer, has announced the introduction of its new Jimmy Bell 2-Pack Collector's Edition, a special commemorative gift set celebrating legendary actor Jimmy Stewart, the new motion picture "Jimmy," and the 80th anniversary of the holiday classic "It's a Wonderful Life."

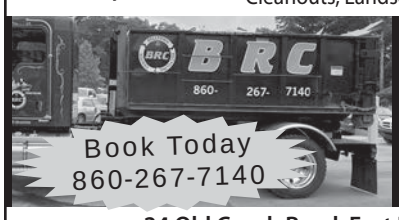
The collectible two-pack features two distinctive bells: an "It's a Wonderful Life" bell honoring the 1946 film and a "Jimmy Bell" inspired by the new motion picture celebrating Stewart's life and legacy.

With a history dating back to 1832, Bevin Bells holds a unique connection to this cherished American film. Bevin Bros. manufactured the original bell featured in "It's a Wonderful Life," creating a lasting link between the historic Connecticut company and one of Hollywood's most treasured holiday traditions.

The introduction of the Jimmy Bell 2-Pack comes alongside the release of the new movie "Jimmy," starring KJ Apa as Jimmy Stewart. The movie opened in theaters nationwide on Nov. 6., and explores Stewart's journey from Hollywood stardom to his distinguished military service during World War II and his eventual return to the screen in "It's a Wonderful Life."

"As we celebrate 80 years of 'It's a Wonderful Life,' we are thrilled to Introduce a collectible that honors both Jimmy Stewart and the film that has touched so many lives," said Cici Bevin, President of Bevin Bros. Manufacturing Company. "Our company has a special connection to this movie, having made the original bell, and we are proud to continue that tradition with a gift set celebrating its remarkable legacy."

For more information, visit www.bevinbells.com.

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Haddam Neck Covenant Church News

Haddam Neck Covenant Church, located at 17 Haddam Neck Rd. in East Hampton, invites all to in-person and online worship Sundays at 9 a.m. Pastor is the Rev. Tom Cowger. Refreshments are served after the service.

Men's Group: The Men's Breakfast Bible Study will meet at Majors on Main Street on Wednesday, Dec. 9, from 7-8 a.m., to share scripture around what the Bible says about being a man at home, at work and in life. There will be coffee, pastries and conversation.

Women's Fellowship: The next gathering will be Thursday, Nov. 19 from 1-3 p.m., in the church Fellowship Hall.

Operation Christmas Child: This is a project of Samaritan's Purse that delivers shoe boxes filled with school supplies, toys and sports equipment to children who live in difficult circumstances. The boxes need to be returned by Nov. 15.

Children's Ministry: Children's Ministry, for children in kindergarten through fifth grade, is held in Fellowship Hall during worship. The theme is "Friends with God" and is taught through Bible stories where the characters are friends with God. A toddler nursery is also available. All are welcome.

Vocal Choir: Rehearsals are Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. New members welcome.

Adult Bible Study: Sundays at 10:15 a.m. in the chapel. The study looks at each of the 12 disciples.

Office Info: The office can be reached at 860-267-2336; hours are Tuesday and Thursday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The church website is www.hncovenantchurch.org.

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Christ Episcopal Church News

Christ Episcopal Church, 66 Middle Haddam Rd., Middle Haddam, holds in-person and Zoom services at 10 a.m. on Sundays. All are welcome. To connect electronically, go to www.christchurchmiddlehaddam.com for directions. The Holy Eucharist will be celebrated with the Rev. Diana Rogers, priest-in-charge.

Food Bank Donations: Food items for the East Hampton Food Bank may be placed in the black totes at the rear of the church.

Returnable Cans and Bottles: All are asked to place donations in the cans by the shed. Note: Glass bottles and aluminum cans should be separated prior to drop-off.

Sunday School: Class takes place each Sunday at 9:55 a.m. Newcomers are always welcome. Contact Rev. Joanne Neel-Richard, the Director of Children's Ministry, at jneelrichard16@gmail.com for information.

Bible Study: Wednesdays at 6 p.m., via Zoom. Contact Bobette Reed Kahn to join, at bobette@kahn.com.

Thanksgiving Food Baskets: The Missions Team is collecting food items for five families this year. Sign up to donate to a local family through Covenant to Care.

Cobalt Lodge Service: The monthly worship service at Cobalt Lodge will be held directly after church on Nov. 15.

Advent Book Study: "Sacred Migration" by Bishop Steven Charleston will be read and discussed over Zoom.

Stewardship Campaign Celebration Coffee Hour: Join the Stewardship Committee for a special Coffee Hour to announce the results of the 2027 Stewardship Campaign.

Information/Assistance: Contact Senior Warden Donna Hryb at 860-633-0472 or donnadubehryb@gmail.com for more information.

East Hampton Library News & Notes

East Hampton Public Library, 105 Main St, has announced the following. For full program descriptions or to register for a program, call 860-267-6621 or visit easthamptonpubliclibrary.org.

Hours: Monday - Wednesday, 10 a.m.- 8 p.m.; Thursday - Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

All-Ages Book Bingo!: Wednesday, Nov. 16, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Win some new books. Refreshments provided.

Adult Programs: Craft + Crumbs: Adults & Grades 8-12: Tuesday, Nov. 17, 6 p.m. Come for a snack program that happens to involve crafts. Learn how to create bookmarks using old book spines. No experience required; supplies included.

Drop-In Mah Jongg Play: Wednesday, Nov. 18, 6 p.m. There will be tables and Mah Jongg sets available. Space is first-come, first-served and open to all levels of play.

Monthly Adult Book Club: Wednesday, Nov. 18, 6:30-7:30 p.m. This month's pick is "Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker" by Jennifer Chiaverini. Pick up a copy of the book at the circulation desk.

Tech Help: Thursday, Nov. 19, 2-4 p.m. Basic technology help for phones, laptops, tablets, and e-readers. No registration required; just bring your device with you.

Teen Programs: Teen TCG Club: Saturday, Nov. 14, 1-3 p.m., for grades 8-12. Come play your favorite trading card games alongside fellow fans or learn a new one. Magic: The Gathering decks will be available for new players to use.

Teen Advisory Board: Tuesday, Nov. 17, 6 p.m. Take a leadership role in shaping how the library serves teens like you. Help plan programs and improve the Teen Space.

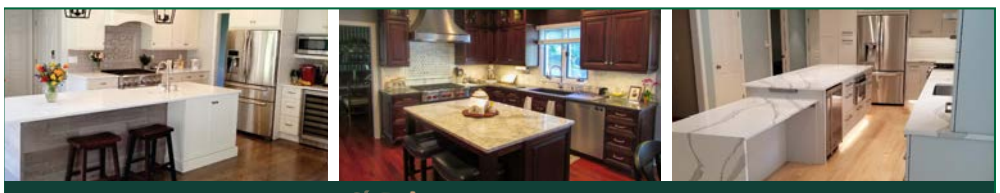
'The Hunger Games' Ultimate Tribute Challenge: Grades 6-12: Saturday, Nov. 21, 1-2 p.m. Test your skills with Hunger Games-inspired challenges and DIY crafts.

Crochet (and More!) with Keri: Grades 6-12: Tuesday, Nov. 24, 6 p.m. Meet up in the Teen Space for a casual evening of crochet and other crafts. Registration requested.

Children's Program: Read to a Therapy Dog: Tuesday, Nov. 17, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Readers will be assigned a 15-minute time slot to read to Jovie, a certified therapy dog. This is an opportunity to read aloud in a comfortable environment. Registration required.

DIY Days: Beaded Pumpkins Grades PreK-5: Saturday, Nov. 14, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Stop by the library to bead a fall decoration. No registration required.

Family Storytime: Saturday, Nov. 28, 11-11:30 a.m. Come down to the library for stories and songs. All ages welcome; best for children ages 18 months to 5 years old. No registration required.



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Holly Bazaar

The Second Congregational Church of Middle Haddam is hosting its Holly Bazaar on Saturday, Dec. 5 (note the change in date), from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at 52 Middle Haddam Road.

Peanuts, Rada cutlery, baked goods, raffles, tag sale items, holiday crafts and a light lunch are all being offered.

Fall Turkey Takeout Dinner

Haddam Neck Congregational Church Ladies Aid will hold the annual Fall Turkey Takeout Dinner at Haddam Neck Congregational Church, 408 Quarry Hill Rd., Haddam Neck, on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 5-6:30 p.m.

Cost is $15 for a full turkey dinner and trimmings and a piece of apple or pumpkin pie.

To place an order, call Melissa Pionzio at 860-993-5311 or Deb Olsen at 860-267-8936.

Turkey Shoots

The Belltown Sportsman's Club will hold Turkey Shoots Sunday, Nov. 22, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., on the club grounds off of Tartia Road, which is off of Route 16. (Follow the signs.)

Bring your own shotgun or one will be provided. Gauge is 20 and 12. The club will supply the shells. Cost is $4 a shot. Refreshments will be available.

For more information, call Kurley at 860-638-7221.

New EV Charging Station in Village Center

The East Hampton Clean Energy Task Force announces the installation of a new Volt Post dual electric vehicle charging station in the village center parking lot, located at the Air Line Trail head.

Payment for charging will be handled directly through Volt Post and individual users will be responsible for associated charging costs.

To ensure this resource remains accessible to everyone, drivers are asked to use the designated charging spaces only while actively charging their vehicles. Overnight parking in the spaces is discouraged, as it prevents others from accessing the chargers.

Helping Hands Open Twice Monthly

Helping Hands, a ministry of Cornerstone Bible Church, is open the first and third Saturdays of each month. Helping Hands offers free clothing, household items, toys, books etc. to anyone in need.

Anyone wishing to shop can do so from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on the first and third Saturdays of every month. Donations to Helping Hands are accepted on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and on Saturdays that Helping Hands is open from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Helping Hands is located at 27 Skinner St. For more information, call Beth Cunningham at 860-365-1054.

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Senior Center to Host Thanksgiving Feast

The Marlborough Senior Center invites the community to celebrate the season of gratitude at its annual Thanksgiving Feast on Friday, Nov. 20, from 1-2 p.m., featuring live entertainment by longtime Marlborough musician Mary Morse.

A familiar name in the local music community, Morse has delighted audiences for decades with her collections of accordions and concertinas. Once featured in local newspapers as "The Music Squeezer," Morse is known for combining traditional melodies with stories about the history of her instruments.

Cost is $10 for Marlborough residents and $12 for non-residents. RSVP is required by Monday, Nov. 16. To reserve your spot, call the senior center at 860-295-6209.

Parks and Rec. Programs

Marlborough Parks & Recreation has announced the following. For full program descriptions or to register, visit www.marlboroughct.gov. For more information, call 860-295-6203.

Adult Programs: Beginner Tai Chi: Tuesdays/Thursdays, noon-12:45 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Fee is $40/resident, $45/non-resident.

Beginner and Intermediate Tai Chi: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 12:40-1:45 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Fee is $40/resident, $45/non-resident.

Pickleball: Mondays, 5:30-7:30 p.m., and Tuesdays/Thursdays, 9-11 a.m., at Blish Park. Open to all levels of play. Registration is free.

Zumba Class – Fall Session: Tuesdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Fee is $60/resident, $65/non-resident, or a $10 drop-in fee. Register on the Parks and Rec. website.

Adult Drop-In Volleyball: Thursdays, 8-10 p.m., at Marlborough Elementary School. Fee is $5 per week. Session runs until June.

Adult Drop-In Basketball: Sundays, 8-10 a.m., at MES. Fee is $5 per week. Session runs until the end of April.

Driveway Reflective Number Signs Available: The cost of the sign is $50. Help emergency services personnel find your home without delay. Vertical sign is double-sided 8" x 24" with 4" numbers on blue highway reflective metal. Order forms are online and at Town Hall.

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Chef Sandy Serves a Little Pasta, a Lot of Love

By Toriana Williams

If there's one thing Chef Sandy Squillante knows how to do, it's turning a room full of strangers into one big, happy Italian family. Add some freshly baked bread, homemade pasta, good wine and a few laughs, you've got all the ingredients needed for a perfect night.

On Friday, Nov. 6, Squillante, owner of Marlborough Bakery and Café, welcomed guests for the long-awaited return of her cooking show, "Romancing The Pan." It was her first live recording in about five years, and the excitement was palpable – delicious, even.

More than 60 people filled the dining area to celebrate, ready for an evening of food, fun and Squillante's one-of-a-kind humor.

Unfortunately, there was one small problem; the portable kitchen system was not ready to go. But if you know Squillante, you know a little thing like that was never going to stop the show.

With a few laughs, and after a glass of wine, she told the crowd, "It is a labor of love, isn't it everyone?"

She explained that getting the kitchen ready had turned into quite an ordeal and an expensive one at that. After learning the electrical work would cost $2,000, she joked about getting some advice from her banker.

"She said, 'Hell no,'" laughed Squillante.

So, her plan?

"We're just going to get through tonight. We're going to have fun, and it's always easier to get drunk to appreciate my show," she smiled.

Then the show was on!

The evening began with a beautiful Italian sandwich made with fresh bread that was almost as impressive as Squillante herself. The giant loaf was about four feet long, and Squillante could hardly contain her excitement.

"Look at this. Isn't it beautiful, this bread?" she asked.

With help from Chef Sebby and a selection of meats sent by her friend and butcher from Philadelphia, Squillante began building a true Italian "hero." For those who grew up outside of New York, it might be called a grinder.

The sandwich was packed with Genoa salami, prosciutto, peppers, divine mozzarella and more. One of the cured meats was beloved by Squillante so much that she joked about eating it in bed.

"I get in bed at night, and I just chew on it. No, seriously," she said. "My breath? Eh, you know, nobody comes near me, but I don't care."

If it wasn't obvious, Squillante loves good food, and she's not afraid to tell you exactly how much.

When Squillante finished preparing her gigantic sandwich, a pre-prepared platter of cut sandwiches was available for everyone to enjoy. Guests gathered around, plates in hand, as the smell of fresh bread and savory meats filled the room.

After attendees got their fill of the first course, Squillante gave a hands-on lesson in making homemade pasta. She told the crowd that many people think making pasta is long-hard work, but it really doesn't have to be.

"My mother and my sisters used to make pasta every summer," she shared.

Her recipe consisted of two cups of flour, two eggs and a little olive oil, and then she showed everyone how to make a small well in the flour, crack the eggs into the middle and slowly mix everything together.

No fancy equipment or expensive kitchen gadgets were needed. Just a little handmixing, some kneading and a bit of patience.

"If it gets too dry, all you do is wet your hands," explained Squillante.



Chef Sandy Squillante of Marlborough Bakery & Cafe opened the doors and invited the community in for the first recording of her live cooking show, "Romancing The Pan," for the first time in about five years. While cooking wasn't exactly an option, she went with the flow and had the crowd laughing nonetheless. It doesn't matter if there was plenty of wine involved or not. Squillante just knows how to have fun.

She then shared that if you wrap it up and set it aside, it should only take an hour or two to rise, ready to be rolled out and cut.

Squillante explained that the pasta could be served in many ways, including with butter or a simple garlic, oil and basil sauce. The lesson made homemade pasta seem less daunting and more like something anyone could try at home.

And of course, no Italian evening would be complete with dessert. To top things off, guests were treated to crepe Chantilly, a sweet ending to a night filled with rich flavors and plenty of good times.

While the food was a big part of the night, the success came from the magic of community gathering together. Live music played as guests chatted, sharing wine and one another's company. Some had known Squillante for years, while others were meeting for the first time, but it didn't matter.

As Squillante is known to do, she made everyone feel like part of the same family.

"I love people, and this, to me, is wonderful. It really is," she said.

She shared with the *Rivereast* that she was absolutely thrilled by the turnout, especially after the long break. The show had been a success for years before the pandemic brought things to a halt, but people kept asking when it would return.

"People were asking me, 'Are you going to do it again?' and we said let's give it a shot," said Squillante. "We already have people asking when is the next show."

Next time, Squillante hopes to have the kitchen set ready for the show and is thinking about making French food. She enjoys cooking many different types of cuisines, from Italian to Asian dishes, and loves keeping her menus fresh and exciting.

Italian food, however, will always have a special place in her heart.

"Italian is always my opener," she smiled.

Concert at Arts Center

If you like bluegrass music and old-fashioned soda flavors like Sarsaparilla, you need to come to November's 4th Friday at the Arts Café at Marlborough Arts Center – which this month will take place on the third Friday.

The Hosmer Mountain Boys, a retro bluegrass band, will perform. Showtime is 7:30 p.m. and doors open at 7 p.m.

The Hosmer Mountain Boys were voted the "Fan Favorite" at the 2023 Podunk Bluegrass Festival, performed in Lexington, KY on WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour, and crossed the pond for the 2024 Battlefield Bluegrass Festival in England.

What is the connection to soda?

Banjo player, Simon Brogie, was born in a house a short walk away from Hosmer Mountain and the famous Hosmer Mountain Soda Company located in eastern Connecticut. As a young boy he told his parents that when he grew up, he would have a bluegrass band one day and name it "The Hosmer Mountain Boys."

Marlborough Arts Center is located at 231 North Main St. Tickets for the show are $15.

Holiday Craft Fair

There will be a Holiday Craft Fair Sunday, Nov. 29, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at American Legion Post 197, 128 East Hampton Rd., Marlborough.

There will be shopping, raffles, and food for purchase.

Residents Enrolls at College

The College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass., recently announced Lucy DeCorleto of Marlborough has enrolled as a member of the college's Class of 2030.

Country Line Dancing Fundraiser

There will be a Country Line Dancing Fundraiser Friday, Nov. 13, from 6-9 p.m., at Marlborough American Legion, 128 East Hampton Rd.

Aric Lemeiux of Sound Train Music will DJ and lead country line dancing. Cost is $10.

Feel free to bring your own snacks. A cash bar will be available. The event is open to the public.

Gathering on the Green Coming

The Gathering on the Green will be held on Saturday, Dec. 5, from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

All are invited to this festive night celebrating the holiday season. Santa will come to town to visit all the good boys and girls of Marlborough. The gathering will feature a lighted fire truck parade, tree-lighting, pictures with Santa, holiday games and activities, refreshments, music, and a fireworks display.

For more information, call Marlborough Parks & Recreation at 860-295-6203.

Setback Tournament

There will be a Setback Tournament Friday, Nov. 20, at American Legion Post 197, 128 East Hampton Rd. Registration is at 6 p.m., and games start at 6:30 p.m.

This is a Round Robin-style tournament, and cost is $10 per person. Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place. There will be raffles and 50/50. All proceeds go to the ladies auxiliary.

For more information, call Sharon at 860-805-6917.

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Resident Reaches Top 5 In Podcast Group Competition

By Toriana Williams

What if the best part of your life is still waiting to happen? What if that dream you've been putting off is still worth chasing?

Marlborough resident Carrie Fuller-McMahon recently shared with the *Rivereast* that those questions became the start of something special.

At age 56, she decided it was time to try something new, and she began her podcast called "Fuller Expectations." Her goal through each episode is to remind people that life doesn't stop giving new chances just because of age.

Now 57, Fuller-McMahon is witnessing that little idea of hers grow into something much bigger than she anticipated. Her podcast has reached listeners in 80 countries and earned a place on Apple's podcast charts for self-improvement and education. She has also recently made it to the top five in her group in the national 2026 Top Host competition.

Not bad for someone who works with a microphone in her home office.

"I love that I can do that, and I don't have to have a fancy studio. I can just do it myself," she said.

The idea for "Fuller Expectations" was born from talks with her friends, said Fuller-McMahon. They often discussed life after 50, changes, new dreams and the feeling that people sometimes get stuck in the same job or relationship or pattern for years.

Fuller-McMahon began to wonder how many other people felt the same way. She wanted to give people a reason to think about what was still possible.

"There's still so much living that we can do in the second half of life," she said.

The podcast launched in July 2025. Each week, Fuller-McMahon shares stories from people who have faced hardships, made big changes or found a new path in life. Some episodes feature guests, while others are solo shows where she talks about topics that interest her.

Her guests, said Fuller-McMahon, come from all walks of life. She looks for people with stories that might inspire someone else in the same way they inspired her.

One guest she recently found was on TikTok and had an especially powerful story, according to Fuller-McMahon. After going through a divorce and cancer treatment, the woman took part in a triathlon just six months later and even went to nursing school in her 50s, graduating at 54.

Fuller-McMahon said that stories like that are exactly what the podcast is all about.

"There are so many people accomplishing incredible things in the second half of life," she said. And she knows a little something about starting over herself.

Before becoming a podcast host, Fuller-McMahon studied communications in college and worked in television news. However, she soon realized that the field was not exactly the right fit for her because she wanted to focus on something a bit more positive. So, she moved into nonprofit work and fundraising.

Today she now serves as the executive director of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut, where her work helps support causes that improve people's lives.

Starting a podcast was a new challenge for Fuller-McMahon, though. Her son helped her learn the editing software, and she worked through the rest one step at a time.

"The whole back-end process is probably the most challenging for me," she shared.

But she didn't give up.

"When you want something bad enough, you figure it out."

Her decision to start the podcast also came from a very personal place. In February 2025, she lost her mother after what was supposed to be a routine medical procedure. The sudden loss came as a shock to her family and forever changed the way she looked at time.

"It just reinforced to me that anything could happen at any time, and so, why not live and do today and keep going?" she said.

Fuller-McMahon realized that she had been thinking about starting a podcast for a long time, but instead of waiting for the perfect moment, she decided to begin.

Her family has been a big part of journey, she shared. Her son helped her get the podcast started, while her father has been a steady source of inspiration. At 77, he has faced many health challenges but still continues to look ahead and make plans.

Fuller-McMahon said his positive outlook has taught her a lot about how to face life.

She added that her husband is supportive and accepts the time commitment this project requires, and she is extremely appreciative.

Fuller-McMahon also practices what she preaches. She exercises five days a week, walks three miles around Lake Terramuggus, visits antique stores and spends time with her close group of friends.

Even with a full-time job, she makes time for the podcast at night and on weekends.

"Because I enjoy doing it so much, it doesn't feel like I'm working," she explained.

She shared that her message to listeners is to stop waiting around.

"What's stopping you from doing it today?" she asked.

She believes people can learn new things, find new interests and take on new challenges at any age. Whether someone is 40, 50, 60 or older, there is still time to make a change.

Now, Fuller-McMahon has another reason to celebrate. Making it to the top five in her group in the Top Host competition is a major step forward for her. The contest offers a chance to move on to the finals, with prizes that include a podcast produced by iHeartRadio, an appearance on "On Air" with Ryan Seacrest and $25,000.

If she wins, Fuller-McMahon hopes to put the prize money back into her podcast to help it grow and expand further, reaching more people and bringing on even more exciting guests. But she's already proud of how far she's come.

"I am so happy just to have made it to the top five," she said. And the community can still help her take the next step!

Voting is still open, and supporters can cast a vote for Fuller-McMahon every 24 hours. There is no cost to vote, and anyone who wants to show their support can do so on tophost.org/2026/carrie-fuller-mcmahon.

Fuller-McMahon has loved every step of her journey so far in creating this podcast, to hosting and to seeing where it takes her. After all, life is too short to keep putting dreams on hold.

"Do things now. Tomorrow's not guaranteed." she said.



Resident Carrie Fuller-McMahon credits her parents as a large source of inspiration for her podcast, "Fuller Expectations." After suddenly losing her mother, left, during what was to be a simple medical procedure, Fuller-McMahon decided to stop waiting around to begin her dream and began recording. "She would be really proud, and I think she would love the content," said Fuller-McMahon, right.

Senior Center News and Notes

Marlborough Senior Center, 17 School Drive, is open for activities. For more information about any senior center program, or to register, call 860-295-6209 or email socialservices@marlboroughct.gov RSVP is required for all special events.

Also, contact the senior center for a list of regularly occurring weekly and monthly programs, such as billiards, Mahjongg, chair massage, the monthly Cookbook Club, a Parkinson's Disease Exercise Class, blood pressure screenings, and more.

Senior Center Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Chair Yoga: Next session is Tuesdays, Nov. 17-Dec. 8. Cost is $35/residents, $40/ non-residents. RSVP and payment due by Nov. 13.

FABBS Exercise: Flexibility, Agility, Better Balance and Strength workout class. Next session is Wednesdays, Nov. 23-Dec. 14, 10:45-11:45 a.m. Cost is $35/residents, $40/non-residents. RSVP and payment due by Nov. 16.

Mahjongg Location: On the first Wednesday of each month, from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Mahjongg will be held at Marlborough Bakery, 8 Independence Drive. All other Wednesdays of the month the game will be played, also from 1:30-3:30 p.m., at Fire House 2 on West Road. All skill levels are welcome. There is no fee to play, but players use 2026 Mahjongg cards, which they purchase on their own.

Nail Care: Wednesday, Nov. 18, 9 a.m.-noon, by appointment only. Britani Olsen from Olsen Homecare will provide a toenail-cutting service. Cost is $35, cash only. Service includes foot soak, nail trim, and lotion. Call the center to schedule an appointment.

Making the Most of Your Medicare: Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2-3 p.m. The Center for Medicare Advocacy is a Connecticut-based non-profit organization that advocates for a stronger Medicare program. During this presentation, an attorney from the center will walk attendees through the rights people have as Medicare beneficiaries, including the rights to choose between different Medicare plans, to appeal coverage denials, and to be screened for cost assistance programs.

Thanksgiving Feast: Friday, Nov. 20, noon-2 p.m. Enjoy a Thanksgiving meal with all the fixins' from Highland Park Market and musical entertainment by local accordian player Mary Morse. Cost is $10/resident, $12/non-resident. RSVP by Friday, Nov. 13.

Birthday Club: November birthdays will be celebrated on Nov. 24 from 12:30-1:30 p.m.. with cake. Open to all friends and family. It does not have to be your birthday month to celebrate. However, if it is please RSVP

Social Services: Energy Assistance: Heating (oil, electric, heat included in rent, propane, pellets, wood) assistance available through CEAP. Season runs through May 31, 2027. Income-based: household of 1/$48,714, household of 2/$63,703. Application assistance for residents 55+ through senior center.

Food Bank: Located at 3 Wilhenger Drive, and can be reached at 860-295-6008. There is an open house Tuesdays from 10 a.m.-noon and 4-6 p.m. The food bank is open to qualified residents in need.

St. John Fisher Church News & Notes

St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Church is located at 30 Jones Hollow Rd. Pastor is the Rev. Carlos Zapata, Bill Gilles is deacon John McKaig is senior deacon retired. Heather Mancini is church secretary and can be reached at 860-295-0001; hours are Monday-Wednesday and Friday, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. People are asked to call before heading over or connect at stjohnfisher30@yahoo.com. The church website is www.stjfchurch.org.

Liturgical Celebrations: Weekend Masses: 4 p.m. Saturday and 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday. The first Saturday of the month at 6 p.m. is a Spanish Mass. **Weekday Masses:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 8:30 a.m. The third Saturday of the month has an 8:30 a.m. Mass. **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:** Mondays at 9 a.m. **Weekly Sacrament of Reconciliation:** Saturdays, 3-3:30 p.m., or by appointment.

Faith Formation Programs: Faith Formation leaders Cindy Bryan and Helena Thomas have begun their new classes for this academic year, with new registrations still accepted. Access the church website or register directly at stjffaithformation@gmail.com. The programs all include service opportunities for students and families.

Ministry, Social and Parish Community Events: An adult choir practices weekly; men's and women's prayer groups, Knights of Columbus, Christian Outreach and Prayer Shawl ministry meet monthly; and an active book club meets quarterly. Social activities are planned throughout the year to provide additional parish fellowship. For details, see the church calendar available on the church website.

Community Outreach and Service: The Community Giving Garden provides fresh produce delivered weekly and in season to the Marlborough Food Bank. Monetary donations are accepted supporting the students and families at Marlborough Elementary School. Food drives are held weekly for the Marlborough Food Bank. Sandwich-making and collection continues the last Thursday of the month for St. Vincent de Paul in Middletown. Christmas Cookie Kits are currently being assembled during the month of November for Marlborough Food Bank. The Christmas Giving Trees with tags will be up the weekend of Nov. 28-29, as the church enters the Advent season. Other scheduled service opportunities can be found in the weekly bulletin.

Additional Programs and Offerings: For information on other programs, seasonal offerings, adult faith formation, youth group, OCIA, Knights of Columbus or other ministries, call the office, visit www.stjfchurch.org, or look for the church on Facebook (Saint John Fisher Roman Catholic Church).

Congregational Church News & Notes

Sunday Worship at Marlborough Congregational Church, located at 35 South Main St., is held at 10 a.m. The service is also broadcast live every Sunday at mcc.marlcongchurch.org and recorded for later viewing. Church pastor is the Rev. Valerie Seaver. Sunday school is held Sundays at 10 a.m. All children in the community are welcome and invited to attend. Childcare for infants and toddlers is provided downstairs in the nursery; however, children are always welcome at the worship service.

Nov. 15 is a Bluegrass Sunday, featuring hand-clapping music by Joyful Blue Bluegrass Band. The service will be led by Seaver.

Nov. 22 is Thanksgiving Sunday. Beth Alves, a church member and a professor at CT State Community College Quinebaug Valley, will be guest preacher.

Weekly Program: Senior Stretch and Strengthen meets Fridays at 9:45 a.m., upstairs in the Thienes Lounge. Cost is $25 per class. All are welcome.

AA: The church sponsors three weekly meetings: Wednesdays at noon in the Youth Room and at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Fellowship Hall, and Thursdays at 6 p.m. in the Youth Room.

ACA meets Tuesdays at 7 p.m. in the Youth Room.

Outreach: The church collects non-perishable food items year-round for Marlborough Food Bank with a basket located in the narthex for Sunday worshippers to bring donations. The next Drive Thru Café, for Marlborough Food Bank clients and their families with vouchers, will be Sunday, Nov. 29. The monthly meal at Florence Lord Housing for its residents will be Nov. 15.

Second Blessings Thrift Shop is located on the lower level with access from the parking lot. The shop is open for shopping and donations Fridays from noon to 3 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Follow the shop through Facebook at Second Blessings Thrift Shop, Marlborough for weekly updates. The eBay shop is open year-round at bit.ly/MCCebay.

General Information: Marlborough Congregational Church is an Open and Affirming faith community and all are welcome. The church does not pass a collection plate, but freewill giving boxes are found by the doors in the sanctuary. Donations can also be made through the church website, or mailed to the church at P.O. Box 57, Marlborough, CT 06447. For more information on the church or its programs, call Seaver's direct line at 860-295-0432, email her at pastorval@marlcongchurch.org, or contact the church office at office@marlcongchurch.org.

Selectmen Prepare for Youth Center Reopening

By Toriana Williams

The Colchester Board of Selectmen raised the pay for the town's Registrars of Voters, approved a $23,037 purchase of equipment to improve town sports fields and appointed seven members to the Charter Review Commission during its Nov. 5 meeting.

First Selectman Bernie Dennler, a Democrat, also reported that the Youth Center renovation is almost done, with a New Year's reopening now the goal. The town must also spend the rest of its remaining federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds by Dec. 31.

Dennler told the board that Colchester has about $26,160 in unspent ARPA funds that can be moved to other approved projects. He said the money will most likely go towards the Historic/Aging Structures Interagency Agreement, which is what is mainly paying for the Youth Center renovation.

The town originally planned to use some of the money for work at the former Senior Center, however, engineering reports showed that the building needed more work than expected.

Therefore, the town shifted its attention to finishing the Youth center at 95 Norwich Avenue.

"We are very close to completion," said Dennler.

Painting was underway, and flooring had been purchased for the first and second floors.

"We are in the cosmetic phase of this thing at this point," he said.

The town plans to move items back into the building during December before bringing children back in for the new year.

Dennler said the building itself has been fully repaired, although some work still remains. Paving the parking lot will not be covered by the remaining ARPA money, and the town will need to work out a property line issue with a neighbor.

The board agreed to the proposed ARPA spending plan, and Dennler said he will bring an updated agreement to the next meeting.

Registrars' Pay Raised

Also at last week's meeting, the board voted to increase the pay for the town's registrars of voters from the equivalent of 10 hours per week to 20 hours per week. The new pay arrangement will begin on Jan. 1, 2027.

The Republican registrar of voters is Julianne Shilosky, and the Democratic registrar is Sara Musson

Dennler said the registrars have been working more houses than they are being paid for and asked for the increase so they were fairly compensated.

"We need to be able to staff the registrar's office," he said.

Board member Rosemary Coyle, a Democrat, supported the change, and said, "They work really hard.

Member Tim Vaillancourt, a Republican, concurred. "They deserve every penny," he added.

The motion passed 4-0, with member Art Shilosky, a Republican, recusing himself from the discussion.

New Equipment to Improve Sports Field

The board unanimously approved the spending of $23,037 on a Toro top dresser for the Public Works Department, pending approval from the Board of Finance.

Grounds Supervisor Tucker Rozevink explained that the machine spreads materials, such as sand, soil and compost, across sports field. This process helps repair divots and holes caused by heavy use.

Rozevink said the town has been borrowing an older machine from Hebron for years; however, the equipment has broken down and is not always available when Colchester needs it.

Public Works Director Joe Leone said having its own machine would allow workers to treat the fields more often and spread smaller amounts of material at a time. He pointed to a past lacrosse tournament as an example of the benefits.

"It rained like … two inches the night before. And they played all day on those fields, and they looked all right at the end of that," said Leone.

Coyle praised the department's work when she said, "All I know is that when you drive around town, the green and the fields - everything looks wonderful. So thank you."

Steps Taken to Avoid Another Salt Shortage

Selectmen approved buying treated road salt from two vendors for the upcoming winter at the cost of $259,100. Leone said Colchester had trouble getting salt last winter when storms and shipping delays caused shortages across the state. At the time, the town had relied heavily on one supplier, which ran out of salt.

"We ended up having to cut salt for one of our storms with sand," said Leone.

He recommended using more than one supplier this year so the town would have a better chance of getting salt when needed.

Dennler also said he hopes to bring back public sand and salt for residents this winter, as the service had been cut during previous budget talks.

"It is my intention that this winter there will be public sand and salt," said Dennler. He added that the town may make changes to prevent contractors from taking large amounts of the materials.

Town Seeks Money from PFAS Settlements

The board also approved several water and sewer projects, including changes to the water filter plant project and new equipment for water monitoring. It also approved participating in additional PFAS class-action settlements.

PFAS are chemicals found in some products that can affect water supplies. Leone said several companies that made PFAS products are involved in lawsuits and settlements, as they can cause detrimental effects to health.

He suggested that the town should take part in the cases before they're settled to improve its chances of receiving money. Leone estimated that settlements involving 3M and DuPont could bring about $350,000 to the town before legal fees. Other settlements may bring in smaller amounts.

"I want to make sure that Colchester receives its due," said Leone.

Members Appointed to Charter Review Commission

The board unanimously appointed Debbie Bates, Tricia Dean, Rob Esteve, Ron Goldstein, Jeff Mastriani, Joanne Rose and Carolyn Shults to the Charter Review Commission.

Youth Wrestling Registration Open

Registration for Colchester Youth Wrestling (www.colchesterwildcats.org) is now open for the 2026-27 season for boys and girls in grades K-8. Practices will be held at Jack Jackter Intermediate School on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

The season starts on Monday, Nov. 30, and runs through late February. The club's mission is to introduce the youth of Colchester and surrounding towns to the sport of wrestling by providing a disciplined and competitive program for kids to learn and develop wrestling skills, self-confidence and the ideals of good sportsmanship.

Questions can be emailed to colchesteryouthwrestling@gmail.com.

Parks and Rec. News & Notes

Colchester Parks and Recreation has announced the following pieces of news. For more information, call Parks and Rec. at 860-537-7297 or visit the Colchester Parks and Recreation website at www.colchesterct.gov/recreation-department.

Home and Business Holiday Decorating Contest: Residents and local businesses are invited to participate in the 2026 Holiday Decorating Contest. Registration deadline for homes and businesses is Nov. 19. Decorations must be completed by Nov. 30. Register online at colchesterctrec.recdesk.com/Community/Home. For more information, call Parks and Rec.

Gingerbread House Decorating Contest: Community members of all ages are invited to show design and decorate their very own gingerbread houses. All gingerbread house entries will be displayed in the lobby of Colchester Town Hall throughout the holiday season, giving the community a chance to admire the festive creations and vote for their favorites. Drop off your completed creation at the Parks and Recreation Office between Nov. 30 and Dec. 4. Visit the Town Hall lobby from Dec. 7-31 to view the entries and cast your vote for your favorite. No pre-registration is needed. For more information, visit the Colchester Parks and Recreation website.

Holiday Homecoming 2026: Saturday, Dec. 5. Arrive by 3:45 p.m. for holiday performances. Santa will arrive at 4:30 p.m. on a decorated firetruck in a parade, and he will take the time to meet with every child in the gazebo. There will be a bonfire, holiday carols, cookies, cider, hot cocoa, and Colchester ornaments. Bring your letter to Santa and mail it to the North Pole in the special mailbox. Every letter will receive a personal response (don't forget to include the child's name and address). Colchester Choir and Orchestra will present its holiday concert at the Colchester Federated Church beginning at 6:30 p.m. The concert is free, but donations are appreciated.

Christmas Dinner Dance

St. Joseph's Polish Society, at 395 S. Main St., is hosting its annual Christmas Polka Dinner Dance with Dennis Polisky and The Maestro's Men on Sunday, Dec. 13.

Hors d'oeuvres will be served at noon, followed by a chicken dinner with mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, pickled beets and dessert at 2 p.m. Dancing will be from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m.

Reservations are a must for this event. Cost is $25 per person. Call 860-537-2550 to reserve your spot.

Police News

10/29: Jacob Slattery, 35, of Colchester, was arrested and charged with violation of protective order, Colchester Police said.

11/3: John Crane, 32, of Old Lyme, was arrested and charged with illegal operation of motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol/drugs, possession of controlled substance, third-degree criminal mischief, interfering with an officer, and second-degree breach of peace, state police said.

Giving Garden Chosen for Fundraiser

The Colchester Giving Garden has been chosen by the local Stop and Shop to be the recipient of their "Bloomin' 4 Good" fundraising promotion for the month of November.

One dollar will be donated to the garden for each specially marked bouquet that is sold during November.

Christmas Fair to Return

St. Andrew Ladies Guild will hold its annual Christmas Fair Saturday, Nov. 14, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave. All are invited to attend.

The fair will feature: homemade baked goods, handcrafted items, "gently-loved" Christmas treasures, a variety of raffle prizes, local vendors and more.

Lunch will be available for purchase from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Toy Drive

St. Joseph's Polish Society, at 395 S. Main St., will host its sixth annual toy drive Saturday, Dec. 12, during the Army vs. Navy football game.

Doors open at 2 p.m., and kick-off is at 3 p.m. A buffet will be served during the game.

A $15 donation or a donation of a new unwrapped toy gets you in to enjoy raffles, buffet and the Army vs. Navy football game.



The Colchester Historical Society 2027 Calendars are now available. The August photo in the calendar is this May 1982 Firematic Muster (or Fire Muster) on the Colchester Town Green. Active and veteran crews competed for the fastest time in a bucket brigade up the ladder. Trophies were awarded for the fastest group in a variety of skills.

Historical Society 2027 Calendars Available

The Colchester Historical Society has announced its 2027 calendars are now availble.

The 2027 calendar features photographs of Colchester's local sites and events from the 1970s and 1980s. Do you remember the Colchester Theater, Dino's, or John "Ski's" airfield? Revisit these familiar places, or discover them for the first time – as Colchester appeared 50 years ago.

The photographs featured in the calendar were taken by Gerard Dauphinais, a local photographer and owner of Camera Cove. Located on Norwich Avenue, Camera Cove offered professional and hobbyist photography equipment, as well as photography classes. Gerard "Jerry" Dauphinais gifted his collection of Colchester images to the Colchester Historical Society.

To purchase a calendar or learn more, contact the Colchester Historical Society at 860-537-3240 or mail@colchesterhistory.org.

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CIT 4-2-26

Man Arrested on Explosives Charges



Fricker

A local man was arrested Halloween night and charged with possessing explosives and assaulting a member of his household, state police said.

Christian Fricker, 36, of Colchester, was arrested Oct. 31 and charged with illegal possession of explosives, illegal possession of exploding fireworks, risk of injury to a child, second-degree breach of peace, and first-degree assault, police said.

According to police, Fricker used an edged weapon on the neck of a household member, causing an injury. A child was in the residence during the assault, police said. Police also said assistance from the Eastern District Major Crime Squad and Emergency Services Unit Bomb Squad were summoned due to "energetic material" being located in the home. Police said "numerous" IEDs/"M-Devices" were located and seized at the residence.

Fricker was released on $175,000 cash bond, and is next due in court Nov. 23, according to the state judicial website.



Cougars Wrap Season… **The Colchester Cougars Juniors youth football squad played WPTP in the playoffs last weekend, and unfortunately lost, 14-6. Still, the Cougars thanked all who showed up at the game Sunday and those that watched via livestream. "We're truly blessed to have such a strong community of support," the Cougars said.**

Colchester Federated Church News

Colchester Federated Church, located at 60 Main St., holds Sunday services at 9 a.m. each week. The church is "Open and Affirming." All are welcome.

Church Office Hours: Monday and Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.; Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 1:30-5:30 p.m. The office manager is Lauren Basler. The office can be contacted at 860-537-5189 or cfc06415@gmail.com. For more information on church activities, look for the church on Facebook or visit ColchesterFederatedChurch.org.

Holly Fair Coming: Watch for more information in the *Rivereast* about the Holly Fair on Dec. 5.

Twelve-Step Meetings: AA meets in the church library Monday-Wednesday and Friday at noon and Thursday at 10 a.m. On Saturdays at 9:30 a.m., AA meets in the Stage Room and Al-Anon meets in the Jerusalem Room. Also, the church hosts 7:30 p.m. meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Boy Scout Troop 72: Meetings are held in the Stage Room every Monday at 7 p.m. from September through June.

Local Salon Holding Drive for CES

This year, Cuts Unlimited's annual holiday project held in memory of Baby Kayce Spooner will focus on refreshing and revitalizing the teachers' lounge at Colchester Elementary School.

The goal of the initiative is to design and fund a fresh, inviting, and comfortable space where teachers and staff can relax, collaborate, and recharge. Organizers are calling on community members, families, and local businesses to help bring this vision to life through monetary donations.

"Each year we choose a specific holiday project to help someone in our community," said Cuts Unlimited owner Keri Vincent. "This year, manager Amy Rianhard suggested that we focus on the teachers in Colchester as our teachers invest so much of their hearts and energy into our children every day."

Vincent continued, "This holiday season, we want to show our deepest appreciation by creating an oasis just for them. Tying this project to the memory of Kayce allows us to turn love and remembrance into a tangible, lasting gift for our school community."

Donations will directly fund new comfortable seating, modern amenities, fresh decor, and functional upgrades to the lounge.

Members of the public who wish to support the CES Teachers' Lounge transformation can bring donations directly to the salon. Cash or checks (made payable to Cuts Unlimited LLC with "#Kaycesgift 2026" in the memo line) will be accepted in-salon or by mail through Dec. 23.

Fundraising Pet Photo Shoot

The Colchester Dog Park Committee is hosting a fundraising pet photo shoot with Santa. Children & families are welcome too. The event will be held at Colchester Fish & Game Club on Sunday, Nov. 29, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The committee will sell digital images, 5x7 and 8x10 photo prints, Christmas cards and ornaments. All orders will be available for pickup at Parks & Recreation by Dec. 11. Digital images will be mailed by Dec. 4. Cash, check, and Venmo accepted. There is a new photo setting this year. Photography donated by SMS Photo of Colchester.

All proceeds will support the Colchester Dog Park. For more information, email tagnobark@gmail.com.

Appointments by calling Janice 860-608-8489. Walk-ins will be accepted if time is available.

Businesses Invited to Join Ornament Trail

The Color House Art & Pottery Studio is bringing back its annual Ornament Trail, a town-wide ornament scavenger hunt taking place Dec. 1–21, and is inviting local businesses to participate.

Now in its second year, the Ornament Trail features 100 unique, handmade ceramic ornaments hidden throughout Colchester at participating businesses and public locations. The community is encouraged to explore the town, discover ornaments to keep, and visit local businesses to collect digital passport stamps for entries into holiday prize drawings.

Participating locations receive promotional exposure and increased opportunities to connect with local customers. Sponsorships help keep this community event free for everyone to enjoy.

The deadline for businesses to register is Nov. 25.

To learn more or register your business, visit www.cohoct.com/ornamenttrail.

Festival of Lights Fundraiser

The Bacon Academy Trustees will host the second annual Festival of Lights Fundraiser on Friday, Dec. 11, at 6:30 p.m., at Historic Bacon Academy, 84 Main St.

The event will showcase locally decorated tabletop holiday trees and wreaths donated by community members, all of which will be offered through a silent auction to support the historic school's ongoing restoration efforts.

Tickets are $25 and include a wine-tasting from Priam Vineyards, cider or hot chocolate, and hors d'oeuvres, plus live music from the Bacon Academy Choir and Jazz Combo band. Event proceeds will support Historic Bacon Academy.

Tickets may be purchased by emailing info@baconacademytrustees.org or visiting baconacademytrustees.org/festivaloflights.html.

★ *Taking a Plunge, cont. from page 1*

Also honored were Elle Sears, the Littlest Gobbler at one years old, and Martha Weigel, who at 83 years old was the oldest plunger.

EHHS student Juliana Ware was once again the top fundraiser in the Under 18 category, bringing in $1,121.33, and Alan Hurst was the top Over 18 Fundraiser, collecting over $3,400.

Keska celebrated the successful event, which she pointed out was started by East Hampton's Crean Family when their children were in high school, leading to a tradition of student participation.

"Started by the Crean family 17 years ago, the Turkey Plunge has grown into a cherished East Hampton tradition," said Keska, "bringing together residents, young and old, local businesses, and community organizations for one common purpose: helping our neighbors in need."

Keska added, "Fueled by local business sponsorships, a shared spirit of compassion, and a continued drive to help others, 17 years later, we are still 'freezin' for a reason' and proving the power of a community that cares."

For additional photos from the Turkey Plunge, see the *Rivereast* Facebook page at www.facebook.com/RivereastNewsBulletin.

Military Honor Squads for Veterans

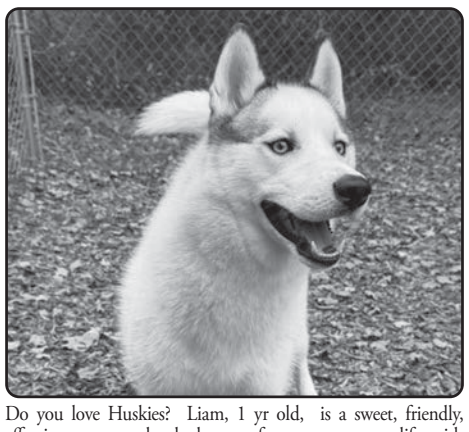
In Connecticut, 12 volunteer service organizations (VSOs) step in to render military honors for departed veterans – and one of the 12 organizations is in Colchester.

These honor guard services are coordinated through the funeral provider and the CT Army National Guard (NG) Military Honors Unit. A family need only provide proof of honorable service to the funeral home, in order for their deceased veteran to get the honor squad services they have already earned. There is no charge for military honors as the NG Military Honors Unit will provide representatives from the branch of service in which the veteran served at no cost. The National Guard will also contact one of the VSO to provide a rifle salute and play Taps.

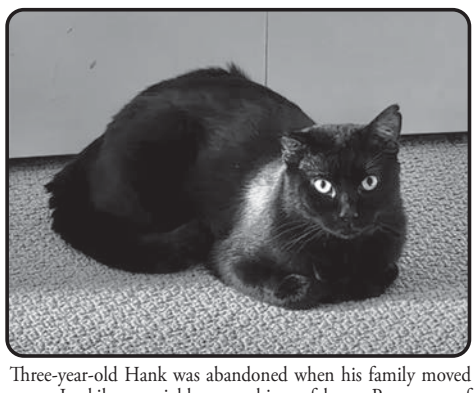
The local volunteer service organization is the Colchester Veterans Honor Guard. It was formed nearly 24 years ago to help veterans' families by training in and performing honor squad duties. The Colchester Honor Squad meets the first and third Tuesday of every month from 7 to 8 p.m. at the former senior center, now "Veterans Hall," at 95 Norwich Ave. The 20-plus member squad is actively looking for new members so that it can continue to provide funeral honors to all departed veterans. Any interested veteran is welcome to stop by a Tuesday meeting.

For more information, contact Al Letendre at 860-537-6516 or letendrej@sbcglobal.net.

"PET OF THE WEEK"



Do you love Huskies? Liam, 1 yr old, is a sweet, friendly, affectionate guy who had an unfortunate start to life with virtually no socialization before being rescued. He was terrified of everything when he came to POA, but has quickly learned to trust people and has blossomed into a playful love of a dog. He seeks out affection and loves the company of other dogs. Liam is very smart and learns quickly. He likes treats, but what he really loves is squeaky toys, of course he'll shred them to bits if left alone with them, but what fun is a squeaky toy if you don't shred it and disable the squeaker - isn't that the point?



Three-year-old Hank was abandoned when his family moved away. Luckily, a neighbor got him safely to Protectors of Animals. Despite everything that happened to him, he wants to be your friend. He will follow you around.
With Hank, you may never go to the bathroom again without company. And we can guarantee you'll never make dinner without company, because Hank is very food motivated. With cats, it's been a little bit more of a mixed bag. Some cats like Hank (and he likes them right back). Hank would do fine as your one and only or can share space with a respectful, low-key cat. Hank is FIV+ but that does not mean he can't live a long and healthy life.

FOR MORE INFO ON ADOPTING CATS OR DOGS, CALL 860-569-0722
VOLUNTEERS & FOSTER HOMES NEEDED – CALL: 860-569-0722

Protectors of Animals, Inc. 144 Main St., Unit O, E. Hartford, CT 06118
A non-profit, all volunteer animal rescue organization, rescuing abandoned, abused and impounded cats and dogs.
WWW.POAINC.ORG

CIT11-12-26

Senior Center News & Notes

Colchester Senior Center, 15 Louis Lane, has announced the following. **Unless noted, registration is required for all programs.** Credit cards are currently not accepted. For full descriptions of programs and to register, call 860-537-3911, email csc@colchesterct.gov, or for a full list of activities, visit www.colchesterct.gov/colchester-senior-center.

Monday, Nov. 16: 9 a.m., **Making Memories, Exercise w/ Anne;** 10 a.m., **Sittercize, Haircuts with Deborah;** 10:30 a.m., **Healthy Food Series: Cranberry Sauce Demo;** 11 a.m., **Learn to Sign;** 11 a.m.-noon, **Fitness Orientation;** 12:30 p.m., **Mah Jongg, Set Back, Bridge.**

Tuesday, Nov. 17: 9 a.m., **Making Memories;** 9:30 a.m., **Diabetes Management Class**; 9:45 a.m., **Tai Chi;** 10:30 a.m., **Thanksgiving Bingo, Book Club;** 12:30 p.m., **Pinochle, Decoupaged Candle Holder Craft;** 1 p.m., **Cornhole;** 1:15 p.m., **Bingo;** 5:30 p.m., **Hand & Foot Card Game**; 6 p.m., **Pizza & Movie Night – "The Thursday Murder Club"** (rated PG-13).

Wednesday, Nov. 18: 9 a.m., Making Memories, Walking Group; 9 a.m.-3 p.m., **Reflexology;** 10 a.m., **Adult Coloring, Hand and Foot Card Game, Sit & Be Fit Video;** 11 a.m., **Turkey, Thanks, Togetherness Luncheon;** 1 p.m., **Sew-cial Time;** 1:30 and 2:30 p.m., **Cardio Drumming.**

Thursday, Nov. 19: 9 a.m., **Exercise w/ Anne;** 10 a.m., **Sittercize, Wii Bowling;** 10:30 a.m., **Shopping Trip;** 11 a.m., **Yoga;** noon, **Senior Benefits;** 12:05 p.m., **Chair Massage;** 12:30 p.m., **Dominoes, Needlework Club, Christmas Ornament Class;** 6 p.m., **Ultimate Bingo.**

Friday, Nov. 20: 9 a.m., **Social Service Hours, Open Art Studio;** 10 a.m., **Sit & Be Fit;** 10:30 a.m., **Choral Group;** 11 a.m., **Yoga;** 1-3:30 p.m., **Open Ping Pong;** 1:15 p.m., **Bingo.**

Movie Time – "Ordinary Angels": Monday, Nov. 23, 10 a.m. In the film, a struggling hairdresser moves mountains to help a girl waiting for a liver transplant, and sets in motion a tale of faith, everyday miracles and ordinary angels. This is a free program, and popcorn will be served.

Trail Crew Work Party

The Colchester chapter of Avalonia Land Conservancy will hold a Trail Crew Work Party on Sunday, Nov. 15, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Meet in the Bulkeley Hill Preserve parking lot on Bulkeley Hill Road. The focus of the work party is to blaze a trail looping around the northern end of the property to a vista, then back down through the meadow.

Bring work gloves, a leaf blower, weed wacker, lopers or steel rake.

Contact Kevin Byrne 860-319-7012 for further information.

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Bobcats Bounce Raptors in State Tourney

By Josh Howard

Playing in the second round of the Class M state tourney, Bacon Academy boys soccer outlasted RHAM High School, 3-2, on Monday to advance to the state quarterfinals.

Three different Bobcats scored in the victory as Shane Meyer, Cayden Steele, and Zach Chiarella found the back of the net in the home victory. Chiarella and Logan Sheridan added assists as the team tallied three or more goals for the tenth time this season.

Bacon head coach Skip Starks was happy with the team's performances, particularly over the first 40 minutes when the Bobcats took a 3-1 lead into the break

"[We're] certainly happy to hang on and get the win to advance," noted Starks. "I'm proud of the relentless effort from our boys."

The visiting Raptors clawed back twice from two-goal deficits as Caiden Rojas scored a goal in the first half, narrowing the margin to 2-1, and Alexander Elomma added one in the second half to again make is a one-score contest.

But Bacon's defense tightened down the stretch as goalie Mike Wisniewski, a senior captain, made six saves in total to preserve the victory.

"Both teams are not afraid of physical play, but we were successful in finding attacking openings once we calmed down and played the ball on the ground," assessed Starks.

Steele, who scored on a header, was named as the Man-of-the-Match after manning both the midfield and wing throughout the contest.

Starks said that Steele, a sophomore, was "tenacious all over the field", adding, "When we play like that, we're a top tier team."

The second-round tourney contest came on the heels of a pair of first-round victories for the neighboring school.

The No. 7-seed Bobcats eliminated No. 26, Bullard Havens Tech, 5-1, behind a pair of goals and two assists from Chiarella.

The No. 10 Raptors ousted No. 23 Jonathan Law in penalty kicks as senior Derek Barone scored the team's lone goal in regulation and netted the decisive penalty kick as four of the five Raptors converted in the extra session

Monday's loss ended the season for RHAM, who wrapped up a nine-win season after finishing 8-4-4 in the regular season.

Bacon's victory earned the Bobcats a spot in the state quarterfinals for the second straight season.

Following an 11-4-1 regular season, Bacon tallied three more wins in the Eastern Connecticut Conference (ECC) Division II tournament to capture the conference crown. In the 1-0 conference triumph over NFA, Owen McLoughlin scored the championship clincher with an assist from Chiarella.

Chiarella, a senior captain, was named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the conference tourney and received ECC first-team honors with teammates Zachary Russo and Izsak Treat.



Following a conference championship, Bacon Academy boys soccer won a pair of state tournament matches. On Monday, the Bobcats defeated RHAM, 3-2, in the second round of the Class M state tourney.

Wreaths Across America to Return

Volunteers from the Westchester Cemetery Association and Scout Troop 72 are supporting Wreaths Across America at Westchester Cemetery, working to ensure that the 55 service members buried there will indeed be honored again this year with the placement of live, balsam veterans' wreaths as part of National Wreaths Across America Day 2026.

The cemetery will join the more than 5,600 participating locations across the country to Remember, Honor and Teach on Saturday, Dec. 19. This annual event is held outdoors on location at the Westchester Cemetery off Route 16. The program starts at noon.

Donations are welcome in the form of purchasing a wreath for a soldier and laying wreaths at gravestones. Each individual $17 sponsors a fresh balsam veterans wreath that will be placed on the headstone of an American hero on Dec. 19. For event details, visit www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org/CTWCCC. You can also send your contribution to Wreaths, c/o Joanne Rioux, 219 Lakeview Dr., Colchester, CT 06415.



Jazzing for a Cause… **The community at Jazzercise Colchester recently collected $310 in support of those impacted by breast cancer. Jazzercise Colchester said it hopes to help Connecticut's Breast Health Initiative in its efforts to find cures for breast cancer. For more information on Jazzercise Colchester, stop by the studio at 188 Norwich Ave., Entrance C, or visit jazzercise.com.**

Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover

Town Clerk Open House, Senior Center Meet & Greet

The Town of Andover invites residents to the second annual Town Clerk's Office Open House on Monday, Nov. 23, from 1:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Andover Town Hall, 17 School Rd.

Also on that same day, between the same hours, there will be a Meet & Greet at the Andover Community and Senior Center, 25 School Rd.

First held last year following Roberta Dougherty's election as Andover's Town Clerk, the Town Clerk's Office Open House provided an opportunity for residents to meet their new Town Clerk, learn about the services offered by the office, and connect with one another. This year's event continues that tradition of welcoming residents and building connections within the community.

Residents are invited to stop by, say hello, and enjoy light refreshments while learning more about the services provided by the town clerk's office. Dougherty will answer questions.

Meanwhile, the Andover Community and Senior Center will also welcome visitors for a Meet & Greet with the center staff. Residents will have an opportunity to meet the staff, tour the center, see the new senior transportation van, and learn more about the programs and services available. Light refreshments will also be served at the center.

Republican Registrar to Retire

The Republican registrar of voters (ROV) is retiring from the position on Dec. 31, and the Republican Town Committee is looking for a replacement. The ROV works with the secretary of the state to provide up-to-date voting information.

If you are a retiree, or an at home parent who wants to earn extra money this position may be for you, the Republican Town Committee said. The current term is an elected one.

Salary is paid quarterly. You would also be paid for training, conventions, travel, and town meetings.

Since the registrar's last day will be Dec. 31, the RTC said it would be ideal to have someone starting to learn by Nov. 30 if possible.

Call Republican Town Committee Chair Carol Barton at 860-230-5854 for more information.

Recreation Commission Events and Programs

The Andover Recreation Commission has announced the following pieces of news. For more information, contact Meghan Lally, Recreation Commission chair, at AndoverRec@andoverct.org or 203-313-4104.

Andover Youth Basketball (AYB) Volunteers Needed!: Are you a current or former basketball player looking to give back to your community? AYB is looking for high school students and adults to volunteer for 1-2 hours on Saturdays from December through February to run the score clock and/or manage the game book during games. All adult volunteers must agree to a background check and interview by the AYB subcommittee. High school volunteers will be supervised by an onsite adult coordinator from the AYB program. If interested, email the AYB Coordinator at AndoverCTYouthBasketball@gmail.com.

Recreation Commission Meetings: The commission meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in the Town Hall Community Room as well as via Zoom. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Basketpalooza, Quilt Raffle Coming

The Andover Friends of the Library group is preparing for this year's Basketpalooza fundraiser – and is looking for help!

If you'd like to donate a themed basket or gift card to an area business, all donations should be brought to the Andover Public Library by Wednesday, Nov. 25, at 3 p.m., as Basketpalooza starts Dec. 1. The drawings for all baskets will be held on Monday, Dec. 21, at 5 p.m. If you have any questions, please contact the library at 860-742-7428. The Andover Public Library is located at 355 Route 6, Andover.

Also, while you're dropping off items and/or purchasing Basketpalooza tickets, you're invited to check out the handmade quilt that is being raffled for the Andover Friends of the Library. It was handcrafted by Library Friend Jean Mamonas.

Quilt raffle tickets are $2 each or 3/$5, and the drawing will be held during the intermission of the Friends' presentation of Christmas in New England – a free, festive holiday concert that will be held on Friday, Dec. 18. More information on the Christmas in New England concert will be announced soon.

Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover

Community & Senior Center Happenings

The Andover Community and Senior Center (ACSC), located at 25 School Rd., is open Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and Friday from 9 a.m.-noon. All are welcome. For more information – including full program descriptions – and to register for events, call director Tess Grous at 860-742-7305 ext. 4510 or at 860-798-6862.

The center's monthly newsletter is available online at www.andoverconnecticut.org. Copies are also available at the center, Town Hall, and Andover Public Library. To receive the newsletter by email each month or to reserve space, call 860-742-7305. Also call or stop by the center if **interested in volunteering.**

Transportation: Call 860-498-2326 to schedule transportation. Provide a one-week notice for all appointment requests. Transportation is available for town events and meetings, voting, senior events, group shopping and medical appointments. Transportation available to Andover seniors, veterans, and disabled are welcome. The driver shifts end at 5 p.m. If assistance is required, passengers may bring an aid (age 18 or older).

Regular Weekly and Monthly Programs: For a list of regular weekly and monthly events, such as Movies, Wednesday Lunches, Stretch & Strength fitness classes, Chair Massage and more, see the monthly newsletter, "Community Connections." Transportation is available.

Friday Lunch Bunch: Nov. 13, Andover Pizza, noon. Nov. 20, Gina Marie's Restaurant.

Grocery Shopping: Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m. Manchester Nov. 24, and Willimantic Nov. 17 and Dec. 2. Also, on Thursday, Nov. 19, shop Trader Joe's and Michael's. Transportation is available.

Beginner Quilting with a Twist: Mondays, Nov. 16, 23 and 30, 3-6 p.m. Cost is $10 per class. Call the center for fabric requirements and to sign up.

Andover Community & Senior Center Giving Tree is accepting applications from now through Nov. 13. Contact the center at 860-742-7305 ext. 4510 if you are a family in need this holiday season or if you would be interested in donating a gift or gifts.

Stronger Core, Better Balance: New class begins Friday, Nov. 13, and will meet every Friday at 10 a.m. Enjoy gentle chair-based exercises designed to strengthen your core, improve stability, and help reduce risk of falls.

Seated Beach Ball Volleyball: Fridays at 11 a.m. beginning Nov. 13.

'Jimmy': Friday, Nov. 13, 6 p.m. Sign up and come for popcorn and an evening movie! The movie will be "Jimmy," the true, untold story of Jimmy Stewart. The movie follows Jimmy's life, from winning an Academy award for "Philadelphia Story," to enlisting and becoming a combat pilot in World War II, to landing the famous role as George Bailey in "It's a Wonderful Life". Call 860-742-7305 ext. 4510 if you would like to come.

Changes to Medicare: Friday, Nov. 20, 1 p.m. Melanie Lambert from the Center for Medicare Advocacy will help people understand the 2027 changes to Medicare. She will be available after the presentation to answer individual questions. All are welcome.

Haircare with Helen: Monday, Nov. 30, 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Haircuts are $22, or free for Andover veterans. Call the center for an appointment.



Wonderful Waterfall… **Roy and Laurie Ivers of Portland brought along the *Rivereast* to Taughannock Falls one of the many waterfalls in Ithaca, N.Y.**

Where in the World is the *Rivereast*?

Taking a vacation or a day trip soon? Or simply going out to dinner? Bring the *Rivereast* with you! Whether it's across the globe or across town, we want to see where you've been! Simply snap a photo with the *Rivereast*, send it to bulletin@glcitizen.com and, if printed, you'll receive a gift card to Campagna Restaurant in Portland! Further details are listed below. Happy travels!



California Here We Come… **Tim, Leslie and Penelope Daly of East Hampton brought along the *Rivereast* to see Elk Head in Trinidad, Calif., on a recent trip.**



Pals in Poland… **In September, Bill and Jeanne Kowalsky of Colchester and Tom and Barbara Chamberland of Portland visited Poland. They toured several cities and historical sites including Warsaw, Malbork Castle, Gdansk, Wroclaw, Auschwitz and Krakow. Bill, Jeanne, Tom and Barbara are pictured in front of St. Mary's Basilica in the Old Town Market Square in Krakow.**



North to Alaska… **The Allen family of Hebron brought the *Rivereast* to Whittier, Alaska.**

Where in the World?

Going on a trip? Bring along the *Bulletin*!

Submit your travel photo holding the *Rivereast News Bulletin*, and you will win a $25 Gift Card to Campagna Restaurant if your photo is one the four entries selected!

To enter, email your photo and address to: bulletin@glcitizen.com

$25 GIFT CARD

Campagna Restaurant & Lounge

Fine Italian & American Cuisine
151 Marlborough Street (Rt 66), Portland

Elementary School Ranks No. 1 for Student Growth

By Toriana Williams

Andover Elementary School (AES) is celebrating an exciting win after being ranked number one in Connecticut for single-year growth on the state's school accountability index. The school also earned the title of School of Distinction, which placed it among the state's top performing schools.

These achievements mark a big step forward for AES. The school earned an accountability index score of 88, an increase of more than 13 points from the previous year. Now, it has the third-highest overall accountability index score in the state and has moved from a Category 2 school to a Category 1 school, the highest level.

Principal Taylor Parker shared with the *Rivereast* that the news was both exciting and a little surprising.

"We were so excited," Parker said. "It just felt so good to be affirmed that all the hard work we were doing was paying off for the kids, because we get to see that every day."

The state's accountability index works similarly like a report card for schools, explained Parker. It looks at several parts of a school's performance, not just test scores. For elementary schools, those measures include academic growth, student performance, attendance and physical a[fitness.

AES' score shows that students are making strong progress in their learning and in other areas. The school also earned several School of Distinction awards for its work in English language arts and math. These awards recognized both high student performance and strong growth, and AES received recognition for growing among students with higher needs as well.

Parker shared that the school earned recognition in all of the award categories available to it, and that only about 16 schools received every distinction award.

The results also showed that students who need extra help are also making progress alongside their classmates. Parker said the school does not have an "achievement gap," which means students with higher needs are growing just as quickly as other students.

The question is, then, how did such a small elementary school achieve such big results?

According to Parker, there isn't a single answer. Instead, she explained that the success comes from teachers, school leaders, students and families working together every day.

"We focused on high-quality instruction. We are building strong culture and community," said Parker.

She explained that the school chose to focus on a few important goals rather than trying to do too many things at once. One major focus was literacy, which includes reading and writing. School leaders worked to make sure teachers used strong teaching methods and followed the same goals across different classrooms.

Teachers also take part in learning walks, where they visit each other's classrooms to see what's working and to share ideas. Staff training and the school's improvement plan have also focused on making classroom instruction stronger.

"We're doing the work, and we're doing it every single day," said Parker.

Superintendent of Schools Valerie Bruneau credited teamwork as a large part of the school's success.

"AES is a very unique place," Bruneau wrote in an email to the *Rivereast*. "When we talk about the 'how did we get here,' the answer is comprehensive. We have the perfect recipe of a cohesive administrative team, a dynamic school impact leadership team and a fully dedicated staff."

Bruneau also praised Parker's leadership and the high expectations she sets for both students and teachers.

"[Parker] has remained committed to rigorous expectations for all staff and students, but she provided the knowledge and support, allowing them all to reach their goals," she said.

Another important part of AES' success also begins before students even enter the elementary school. Bruneau pointed to the school's expanded preschool program as a key part of building strong learning skills early.

The program gives some children up to four years of learning and preparation before they enter first grade. Bruneau believes those early years help students build the skills they need to succeed later.

"It is no coincidence that we have been tracking on an upward trajectory ever since we expanded preschool," she wrote.

She also showed appreciation toward the community's support for keeping class sizes smaller in the school's fourth and fifth grade classrooms. Instead of having one class of 28 students, the school was able to have two classes of 14.

"It was possible because we fought for the two classes of 14 instead," said Bruneau.

Both leaders shared that families have also played a major role. Parker said parents and teachers often stay in close contact and work together to understand what each child needs, both inside and outside the classroom.

"Our families are truly partners; we couldn't do that without their partnership," said Parker.

Looking forward, AES plans to keep building on its success. Parker said the goal isn't just to keep high test scores, but to also make sure every student continues to learn and grow, no matter where they're starting.

For students already working above their grace level, that means helping continue to move upward. For students who are having a harder time, teachers create plans based on their individual needs.

Parker said the biggest reward is seeing students succeed and knowing that all the hard work really is making a difference. The number-one ranking is a reason to celebrate, but it's not the finish line.

"We don't sit in, 'We did it well enough,' We're always in, 'What else could we do?" said Parker. "Hopefully we just keep getting better and better."

Fire Department Turkey Drive

All are invited to help the Andover Volunteer Fire Department reach its goal of 100 turkeys for the Andover Food Pantry. The fire department said it is in need of turkeys, stuffing and monetary donations.

Donations will be collected Saturday, Nov. 14, from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., at the firehouse on School Road. Make checks payable to Andover Food Pantry.

Wreaths Committee to Meet

The Wreaths Across America 2026 committee meeting will be Thursday, Nov. 19, from 6-7 p.m., in the Andover Community and Senior Center.

Attendance is encouraged as the committee enters its final month of planning. The committee said it has a few issues to wrap up and some semi-final coordination to make. Wreaths Across America will be held at Veterans Monument Park at noon Saturday, Dec. 19.

For more information, come to the meeting or contact Susan Camoroda at 703-472-3209 or veterans@andoverct.org.

Library Friends to Meet

On Tuesday, Nov. 17, at 6:30 p.m., in the Children's Room of the Andover Public Library, the Andover Friends of the Library executive board will meet.

The board will discuss what it's done since May, and decide how to generate funds in the upcoming year, to support the library.

All are welcome to attend. If you are not able to be there, and have ideas for purchases, programs or enhancements, email andoverfol@gmail.com.

Bingo & Basket Raffle

Andover Congregational Church, located at 359 Route 6, will hold a Bingo & Basket Raffle night on Friday, Nov. 20, starting with dinner at 5:30 p.m. The game starts at 6:30 p.m.

Admission is $15 and includes dinner, drink, dessert and bingo. No reservations required.

Leave a message at the church at 860-742-7696 for more information.

Clothing & Linen Sale

Andover Congregational Church, located at 359 Route 6, will hold a Clothing & Linen Sale Saturday, Nov. 14, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., with a Bag Sale from 2-3 p.m.

The church will be open Friday, Nov. 13, from 46 p.m., for an Early Bird Sale. There is a $5 admission charge.

Donations can be left on the cement ramp at the back of the church. Leave a message at the church at 860-742-7696 for more information.

Caregiver Support Group to Meet

Losing a loved one is difficult enough without having to navigate a mountain of paperwork, legal forms, financial accounts, and other administrative details. Who do you turn to when you simply don't know where to begin?

The Andover Caregivers Support Group will address that question at its December meeting on Thursday, Dec. 3, at 7 p.m. at the Andover Public Library, 355 Route 6. The meeting will run for approximately one hour, and the public is invited to attend.

Guest speaker will be Ed Knight of Transference, whose tagline is "Your Partner in Estate & POA Paperwork."

Transference specializes in helping families navigate the administrative work associated with Probate Court (preparing court petitions, forms, and other required paperwork), Asset & Account Management (organizing estate documents, re-registering accounts, and coordinating with financial institutions), and Professional Liaison (working with an estate attorney or CPA to help make sure important details are addressed).

This meeting will have a second speaker from October Kitchen in Manchester. October Kitchen is a professional chef delivery service that offers a wide variety of meals catering to common dietary restrictions such as diabetic-friendly, heart-friendly, sodium-sensitive, wheat-free, and more. All meals are fully cooked, so consumers only need to heat and eat them. October Kitchen offers fresh new menus every week and a curated collection of flash-frozen favorites. The staff cooks fresh meals daily.

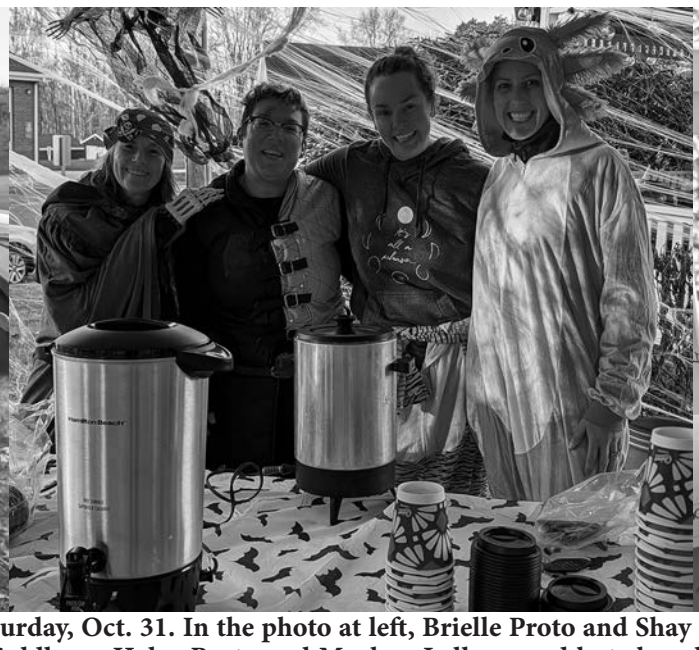
The meeting will conclude with its usual "Show and Tell" segment, where participants are encouraged to share tips, tools or gadgets that assist in caregiving.

Caregiving can be a demanding journey, often accompanied by exhaustion, isolation, fear, and stress. This support group is designed to bring together individuals who are traveling the same road, offering a space to share experiences, learn about resources, and connect with others who understand firsthand the challenges of caregiving.

Whether you have recently stepped into the role of caregiver or have been providing care for years, this group aims to foster a sense of community, reassurance, and encouragement.

For more information, call co-host Dianne Grenier at 860-742-3033 or Cathy Palazzi at 860-916-6122.







The Andover Recreation Commission held a Halloween Trick-or-Treat Stop Saturday, Oct. 31. In the photo at left, Brielle Proto and Shay Lally handed out "Boo Bars" to trick-or-treaters while, pictured in the center, volunteers Marcie Miner, Tori Goldberg, Haley Proto and Meghan Lally served hot chocolate and cider. The event also featured a pumpkin decorating contest. Andover Elementary School teacher Charlene Delmastro's second-grade class was the crowd favorite with the fairy house-themed pumpkin seen at right.

Halloween Trick-or-Treat Stop A Success!

On Saturday, Oct. 31, the Andover Recreation Commission organized a Halloween Trick-or-Treat Stop at Town Hall gazebo for area residents – and it was a big success, according to organizers.

"We tried to do something a little bit different from what has been done in previous years," event coordinator Haley Proto explained. "In addition to handing out candy, we wanted to think of creative ways to engage the children and families that stopped by."

A hands-on sensory activity where children could reach into a covered box feel 'witches' tongues', 'guts,' and 'eyeballs' (all made from kitchen-friendly materials) was particularly popular with the younger trick-or-treaters. The event also featured a pumpkin contest. Pumpkins were decorated the week prior by Andover Elementary School classes. Attendees were encouraged to vote for their favorite. Charlene Delmastro's second-grade class was the crowd favorite with their fairy house-themed pumpkin.

Area businesses were invited to join in on the Halloween fun too. Top Tier Fuel, LLC went all out decorating one of their fuel trucks to create an extra spooky 'touch-a-truck' experience for the kids. King size candy bars donated by Beata Gadomski, a local realtor, were also a hit! Hot cider, hot chocolate, doughnuts, cookies, and of course candy, were handed out to guests.

Food and drinks at the event were made possible through donations from the Columbia Dunkin' Donuts, BJs, and Ted's IGA Supermarket. The Recreation Commission would also like to thank Marcie Miner and Ashley Roberts for volunteering during the event, as well as the more than 100 residents that stopped by to participate in the fun.

WAIM Flea Market

Windham Area Interfaith Ministry (WAIM) will hold its 5th Floor Treasures flea market on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 8 a.m.-noon, at 866 Main St.

Items offered include framed art, glassware, rockers, toys, collectibles, household finds, and more. Payment options: cash, charge and check.

WAIM is a social-service nonprofit that serves Andover and Hebron, as well as Ashford, Bolton, Chaplin, Columbia, Coventry, Hampton, Lebanon, Mansfield, Storrs, Scotland, Willington, Windham, and Willimantic.

For more information, call 860 456-7270 ext. 104 or Kathy Callahan 860-228-0873.

Congregational Church News

Andover Congregational Church, UCC, located at 359 Route 6, invites all to worship, held Sundays at 10 a.m. All are welcome. The service also streams live on the church's Facebook page (First Congregational Church, Andover, CT). For more information, call the church office at 860-742-7696, email andoverctchurch@gmail.com or visit www.andoverctchurch.org.

Children's Church: Is provided. **Choir:** At 9 a.m. Sundays in the sanctuary.

Food Pantry: Mondays from 5-7 p.m. Bring your own bags. The **Foodshare Van** comes to the church every other Wednesday from 9-9:30 a.m. **Senior Pantry** is on the opposite Wednesdays, from 8:30-10 a.m.

AA Meetings: Saturdays and Mondays, 7 p.m.

Sonshine Stampers: Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m.

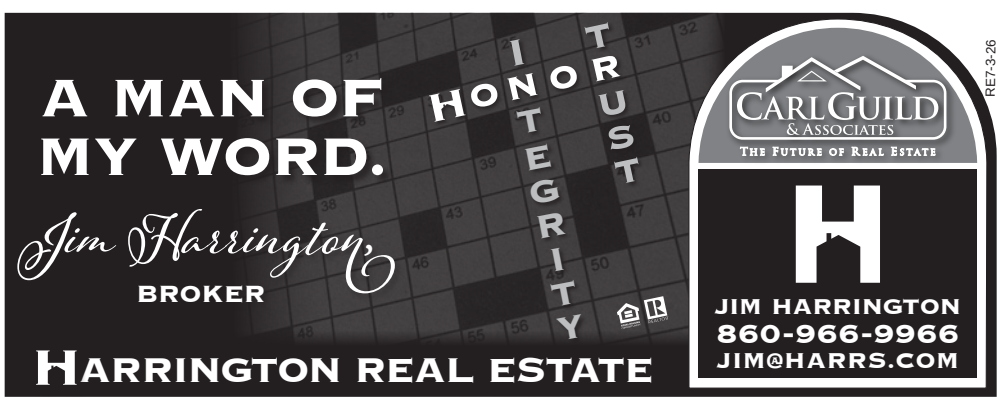
Thanksgiving Dinner: Thanksgiving Day at 3 p.m. Bring a dish to share if you can. RSVP ASAP by leaving a message on the church answering machine. Admission is free; donations accepted.

Therapy Dog to Visit

Sheena the Therapy Dog and her human, Jen Nadeau, are coming back to Andover Public Library on Saturday, Nov. 14, at 11 a.m. Younger readers are encouraged to read a book of their choice, and Sheena will be a great listener.

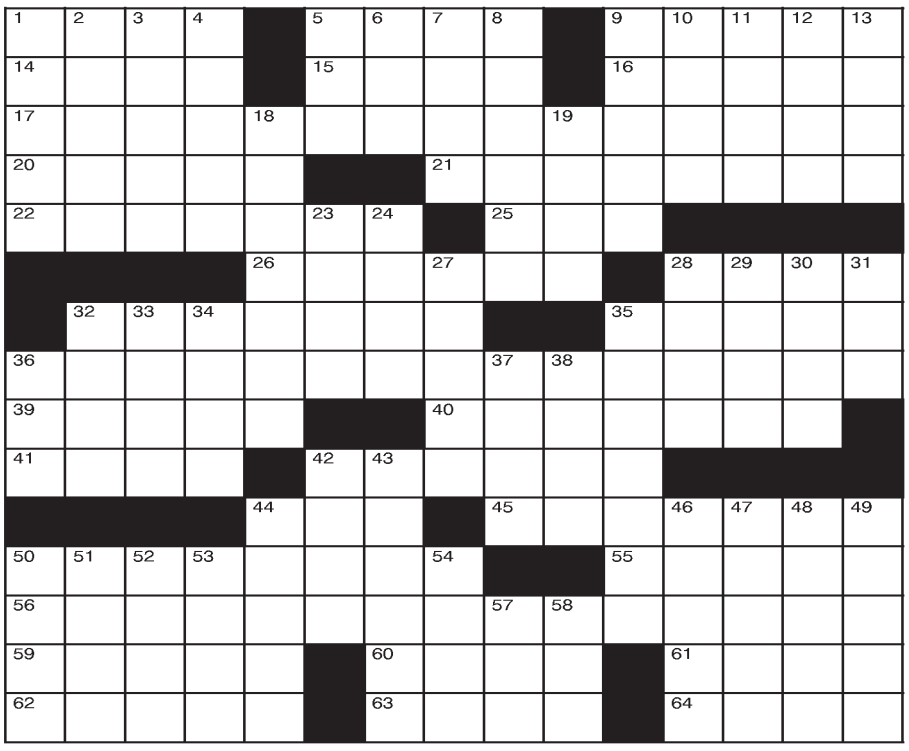
Nadeau and Sheena are bringing a friend this time around: Maryann Fusco-Rollins of the Tolland County UConn Extension Service. Fusco-Rollins will be doing a program on Ozobots.

For more information, call contact the library at 860-742-7428.



PUNS HEAD!

★ *Answers on page 30*



CREATORS NEWS SERVICE By Neil Manausa

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20 Gradually empty
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6 Roker and more
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12 Ten to a sawbuck
13 Sassy
18 Some hairdos
19 Twist around, var.
23 ___ up!
24 Restaurateur Toots
27 Gather from the facts
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34 Suffragist ___ Haynes Gillmore
35 Site of Olympic bombing
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37 "Well, did you ___?": Porter ditty
38 Give a ticket
42 Diamond call
43 Miss Muffet's seat
44 Bolender and Duncan, of the performing arts
46 Rose segment
47 She's Jong at heart?
48 Entertain baby
49 Roo's mother
50 Three-card monte, e.g.
51 Sculptor Nadelman
52 Romeo or Juliet
53 Tune for two
54 Kind of loser
57 Creek
58 Harris or Gibson

★ *School Funding Fight, cont. from page 1*

"I really don't want to have to go to court," said Greenhouse.

She also said she believed the town had agreed to discuss any new payment plan with all three boards before making a change, including the Board of Finance. She expected Maguire to bring his idea to the Board of Education in December, with any change taking effect in the next budget year rather than during the school year.

Maguire explained that the town had used a separate school account since about 2021 and said the change was made because the town had trouble matching school and town payments in its old accounting software. He said the town now uses QuickBooks, and he believes it can handle the payments through one account.

"The only reason we sat there and stopped that is because we had trouble reconciling," said Maguire.

He said the town wants to earn more interest on money that would otherwise sit in separate accounts, and that the town needs better information on school account balances.

Maguire said the proposed change would not take away the school board's legal authority over its budget, and the school would still be able to make its own payments, while the town treasurer would handle the accounting and review the transactions.

A motion was made that called for all regular school operating expenses, including payroll, employee costs, vendor bills and contracts, to go through a town account ending in 5111. Maguire emphasized that it would not include grant accounts, student activity funds or food service funds.

The board approved the motion by a 4-0-1 vote, with member Anne Creme, a Democrat, abstaining.

Creme explained her decision and said, "I'm still abstaining because even the auditor has said it should be separate, and I'm sticking with that, and I don't think we have any right to be voting on this."

In an interview with the *Rivereast* after the meeting, Maguire pushed back against claims that the selectmen's vote was illegal. He said the separate school account was originally established through a previous operational decision, rather than a vote through the Board of Finance.

"I'm not doing something that has not been done in the town before," he said. "All I'm doing is going backwards to the way that it was done previously."

Maguire said that before the separate Andover Public School account was established, school transactions were processed through the town's operating account.

"The only difference is the checks and the disbursements are going to come out of the account ending in 5111. It's not telling them what to spend their money on. I'm not telling them how to spend it, not telling them what checks to write, not approving transactions," he added.

Superintendent Warns of Possible Legal Action

During public comment, Bruneau spoke strongly against Maguire's proposed changes.

She said the state attorneys had already explained the law during the October meeting and that the town must provide money requested from the school's approved budget.

"I do not like to get bullied. I do not like to get pushed around," Maguire said of the October meeting. He added that he didn't want the town's leaders to hold grudges and wanted everyone to work together.

"The state department of education did not bully you, Mr. Maguire. [Three attorneys] clearly informed you … of what the law was," said Bruneau.

She also warned that the school board could challenge the new plan in court.

She said, "Your intent to have the treasurer oversee the ... Board of Education funds will be challenged."

Bruneau said she planned to share with the public the town and school audit reports from 2015 through 2025 – in which, she said, the school's auditor had recommended less town oversight.

In an interview after the meeting, Greenhouse said the October meeting included the school board's attorney, the town attorney and two state education attorneys. She said the lawyers told the group that changing the bank account was a separate issue that should be discussed with the Board of Finance and the Board of Education.

Greenhouse said the Board of Finance had not agreed to change the existing system of 10 payments each year. She also said the school board had asked for a full month's share of its approved budget but received only about $98,000 at first.

The issue was not just about money, Greenhouse explained, but also about trust between the town and school boards. She also said the Board of Education had asked the state Department of Education to review the dispute, and that the school would work with its lawyers to protect its rights.

Bruneau also spoke against the town's actions and said the funding changes began shortly after the voters approved the school budget.

"We do see the motive. We do see the control. We do see the bullying," said Bruneau. She warned that the school could be forced to use its lawyer to defend its rights.

Meanwhile, Maguire said he believed the town was trying to protect taxpayer money, not take away the school's authority. He emphasized again that the town needed better records and a way to earn more interest.

Maguire also questioned the availability of financial information from the school.

"I shouldn't have to do Freedom of Information requests to get information," he said.

He also criticized what he described as a lack of cooperation between the superintendent and town officials, adding that requests for information had repeatedly been denied.

Maguire described the disagreement as about more than just a bank account, and that it reflects a larger problem. He then argued that the Board of Education should exercise stronger oversight of the superintendent.

"The superintendent controls her board. They don't control her; she controls them," he said.

For residents and board members, this proposal has raised important questions about how the change would affect the school board's legal authority.

Recreation Commission Raises Concerns

The school funding dispute was not the only disagreement between the town and the Board of Education discussed at Monday's meeting. The Recreation Commission Chair Meghan Lally told selectmen that several adult groups were having trouble getting time in the school gym for their programs. These groups included pickleball, men and women's basketball and disc golf.

Lally said there was confusion over who controls the gym schedule, and she pointed to the school board's written policy, which said the Rec Commission should schedule community recreation activities.

"We're trying to squeeze everybody in on Sundays basically," said Lally.

Bruneau said the gym has always been the responsibility of the Board of Education through the school principal. Maguire disagreed.

"The gymnasium is a town facility after 5:00, after school hours," he said.

Bruneau shared that the matter would be further discussed at the next Board of Education meeting.

Other Town Business

Several departmental updates and town projects were discussed. Tax Collector Kate Fuller announced that the town's planned tax sale had been canceled because everyone involved had paid their overdue taxes. She estimated the total collected was close to $100,000.

The Recreation Commission shared they held a successful Halloween event at the town gazebo. About 100 people attended, enjoyed candy, donuts, hot chocolate and a special truck display.

Town Administrator Matt Streeter reported that the Long Hill Bridge project was moving forward. The town hopes to reopen the road around the middle of December, though some work may have to wait until spring.

Streeter also said the town was working to move forward with the Percy Cook Trail project and a planned parking garage on Center Street.

Veterans Advisory Committee Approved

Selectmen voted unanimously to create a Veterans Advisory Committee and allow the town to sponsor the local Boy Scout and Girl Scout programs. Town Attorney Dennis O'Brien explained that the local scouts needed a new sponsor after the Andover Congregational Church stopped sponsoring the group.



Obituaries

East Hampton

Judith Hughes



Judith Hughes (nee O'Brien), 87, of East Hampton, passed away peacefully Tuesday, Nov. 3, after a short illness, surrounded by her family. A beloved mom, nana, sister and aunt, Judith will be remembered for her warm smile, incredible kindness, giving nature, unwavering faith, and the lasting impact she had on those fortunate enough to know her.

Born March 3, 1939, in Hartford, Judith was the daughter of the late Frank and Margaret O'Brien. She attended Holy Trinity High School in Hartford and after graduation, was a secretary at Hartford Electric Light Company, where she met her husband, the late William E. Hughes Jr. In 1959, Judith and Bill moved to East Hampton, and she resided in their family home until her death.

Judith devoted more than 45 years of her life to spiritual renewal and ministry within the Catholic Church, serving as a source of faith, guidance, and inspiration to countless individuals and families throughout the Diocese of Norwich and beyond. What began in the late 1970s as a volunteer secretary role, working with Father Ray Introvigne, grew into a lifelong calling and a ministry that touched communities locally, nationally, and internationally.

She helped found and later served as co-director of the Spiritual Renewal Center in Norwich, where she helped lead prayer groups, organize spiritual retreats and healing programs, and guide individuals in deepening their faith. Her ministry extended to prison outreach, leadership training, and spiritual renewal programs throughout the diocese.

Judith's dedication and service were recognized throughout the Catholic community. In 1989, she received the Pope Paul VI Evangelization Award in recognition of her contributions to the diocese. In 2022, she was honored with the Our Lady Queen of Hope Award, recognizing her 45 years of faithful service and leadership. Judith was also a lifelong member of St. Patrick Church in East Hampton, becoming one of the first Eucharistic ministers at the church.

Despite the many honors and accomplishments throughout her ministry, Judith remained humble, always recognizing the contributions of those around her and giving credit to her faith and the people with whom she served. Judith considered it a privilege to help others discover and deepen their own faith. To those who knew and worked alongside her, Judith was truly a beacon of hope, whose kindness, compassion, enthusiasm, and unwavering devotion left a lasting impression.

Judith is survived by her three children, Bill Hughes and his wife Mary-Ellen Reilly, Maura Horan and her husband, Ted and Stacy Reichelt and her husband Jim. She also leaves behind five grandchildren, Casey Horan, Kayla (Horan) Hubler and her husband Chris, Alexandra, Jake and Samuel Reichelt and a great grandchild, Henry Hubler. She is also survived by her siblings Geraldine Dolin, Mary Beth Blaschke (and husband Kenneth) and James O'Brien (and wife Jayne) and many nieces and nephews.

Calling hours were Monday, Nov. 9, at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Tuesday, Nov. 10, at St. Patrick Church, 47 West High St. East Hampton.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made in Judith Hughes' name to East Hampton Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424, St. Patrick Church, or Twilight Wish Foundation at www.twilightwish.org.

To leave online condolences, please visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Melissa Ann Mohrlein



It is with profound sadness that the family of Melissa Ann (Iskrzak) Mohrlein announces her passing on Monday, Nov. 9, after a long illness. Melissa was born July 27, 1979, in Hartford, the daughter of William and Georgiann (Kasza) Iskrzak of Elgin, S.C.

Growing up, her family had called Enfield, East Hartford and Glastonbury home. A 1997 graduate of Glastonbury High School, Melissa went on to study at the University of South Carolina, graduating in 2001 with honors in psychology and sociology. She fell in love with South Carolina and never left. Ultimately, her entire immediately family followed suit and now all call the Midlands home.

Melissa held an avid love of horses from a young age and accomplished many ribboned Hunter-Jumper events in Connecticut including a Tri-State regional event in 1995. Ultimately making her home in Camden – the "Steeplechase Capital of the World" – it all came full circle and made her big, bright smile beam.

Melissa had a dynamic career with Enterprise as a regional manager in the Southeast, and then went on to the insurance and claims side with Progressive and Travelers. Her ability to handle multiple complex claims at once drew the admiration of many for her quick wit and strong work ethic.

Melissa had a kind soul and her generous spirit at times raised many an eyebrow. It didn't matter to her – as the Gospel of Luke says, "Whoever has two coats should share with somebody who has none, and whoever has food should do the same."

She enjoyed bringing new people together, especially with her annual Friendsgiving gatherings, holiday cookouts and USC Gamecocks tailgates. She also loved rescue animals and gave many a home over loving home over the years.

In addition to her parents, she leaves behind her "greatest gift," her son, Brody Coy Jumper; husband, Wayne Mohrlein; sister and brother-in-law, Danielle and Kevin Robinson of Columbia, S.C.; two nieces, Madeline and Parker; three nephews, Gregory, William and Hunter; her godparents, Ray and Maria Kasza of Melbourne, Fla.; as well as numerous extended family and friends.

The family will receive guests from 4-7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 13, at the D'Esopo East Hartford Memorial Chapel, 30 Carter St., East Hartford. The funeral liturgy will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 14, directly at St. Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church, 178 Linwood Ave., Colchester. She will be laid to rest in the Mohrlein Family plot at the New. St. Andrew Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Kershaw County EMS, 515 Walnut St., Camden, SC 29020 or to the Kershaw County Humane Society, 128 Black River Rd., Camden, SC 29020.

Portland

Kevin J. Merk
1989 – 2026



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Kevin J. Merk, 36, on Tuesday, Oct. 27, in Albuquerque, N.M., after a brave battle with cancer.

Kevin graduated Portland High School in 2006. He was a proud U.S. Army military veteran. Kevin loved riding his motorcycle and playing video games. He was known for his witty sense of humor and his kindness and had a unique way of making everyone around him feel seen and valued. He made friends wherever he went and we are all profoundly grateful for the times we shared and the laughs we had together.

Kevin is survived by his beloved wife, Bernadette, and his blended family Devin, Brittney, Marshall, Aedyn, Kasja, Kaden & Kasen. Kevin also leaves his father, Jeffrey Merk and his wife, Laura from Portland; his mother, Carol Goyer and her husband, Glen from South Carolina; and his twin sister Sarah from Middletown.

A private service will be held in Kevin's honor at a later date.

Coventry

Joseph E. Recesso, Sr.



Joseph E. Recesso Sr., formerly of Coventry, went to "tend to his vineyard" on Wednesday, Nov. 4. He was 87 years old.

Born Sept. 12, 1939, in Gloversville, N.Y., to the late Salvatore and Jennie (Diodato) Recesso, Joseph attended Estee Jr. High School and Gloversville High School. He graduated in 1957, and played baseball with the high school team. He earned a Bachelor of Aeronautical Engineering degree from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, graduating in 1961. Joseph also attended the Manchester Community College for COBOL programming among other courses.

On Aug. 4, 1962, he was married to the late Gloria Helen Griffin, who predeceased him in 2009. Together they leave a legacy of four wonderful children. Joseph later had a companion for 24 years, Janet Ragno. Joseph retired in June 1996 after a long and successful career as an Aeronautical Engineer with Pratt & Whitney Aircraft.

In his free time, Joseph enjoyed travelling with Janet from the Rockies to the West Coast. He spent many hours watching the birds, cardinals especially. He loved watching his red tulips grow every spring. He loved rebuilding Mopars, a '69 Super Bee, '69 Charger and a '71 Challenger. He also loved building and flying remote controlled planes. He will be fondly remembered as a hardworking and devoted friend and family man.

His loss will be mourned by many, especially his beloved family. He leaves his longtime companion, Janet Ragno; his children, Joseph E. Recesso, Jr. of Vernon, Nicholas Recesso, of Coventry, Marielle Baker and husband, Charles Rubano of Plainfield; siblings, James Recesso and wife Debbie Kaiser Recesso, Joan and husband Dr. Jeffery Jones, Julie and husband Charles Brown; a sister-in-law, Patricia Recesso; and at least 16 nieces and nephews, 29 grand nieces and nephews and several Doberman "grandkids."

In addition to his parents and former wife, he was predeceased by his son, Shawn Francis Recesso; a brother, John Recesso; and sister, Mary Jane White. Funeral services will be held at the Aurora McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, on Saturday, Nov. 14, beginning with 9-10:30 a.m. calling hours, followed by a celebration of the funeral Mass at St. Andrew Church in Colchester. Burial will be in the Linwood Cemetery.

Donations in Joseph's memory may be made to Doberman Rescue Unlimited, 52 Tenney Rd., Sandown, NH 03873 (www.dru.org).

For online condolences, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Dale C. Kurth



Dale C. Kurth, of Colchester, passed away Tuesday, Nov. 3, at 59 years old. He was born in New London on Jan. 31, 1967, to the late Alfred Carl and Ruth Carol Kurth. He was very close with his father, and at a young age would accompany his father to various construction jobs – learning everything he could from him. After high school, Dale followed in his father's footsteps working in construction, with his specialty as a plumber.

Dale was an avid outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting and fishing and was a lifelong member of the National Rifle Association (NRA). He was a very creative and talented craftsman who enjoyed projects where he got to work with his hands. His favorites included woodworking, gardening, baking, and jewelry making. Whatever Dale set out to do, he did it to the max. He never believed in doing anything halfway and put his heart, creativity, and enthusiasm into everything he touched.

One of Dale's greatest qualities were his generosity and willingness to help others. He was the kind of person who would lend a hand to anyone who needed it, never hesitating to offer his time, talents, or assistance. He had a giving spirit and a genuine appreciation for the people around him. His many talents, artistic abilities, love of the outdoors, and generous nature made him a truly special person.

Dale leaves behind a legacy of hard work, creativity, kindness, and a life lived with enthusiasm. He will be remembered for his many talents, his love of Lake Hayward, his incredible cooking, and, most importantly, the countless ways he touched the lives of others. His presence will be deeply missed, but the memories he created and the things he shared with those he loved will live on in the hearts of all who knew him.

Dale will be greatly missed and always remembered with love by his children, Brenton Kurth of Colchester, and Rochelle Kurth (Michael Sirois) of Windsor; his former wife, Carolyn Kurth of Colchester; his brother Alfred (Maryann) Kurth of East Haddam; his sisters, Kathy (Dennis) Beaulieu of Stella, N.C., and Donna Hicks of Salem; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in in Dale's memory to the ASRA Pain Medicine Chronic Pain Medicine Research Grant (asra.com/about-asra/research-grants/chronic-pain-medicine-research-grant).

A visitation will be held at the Aurora McCarthy Funeral Home on Sunday, Nov. 15, from 1-3 p.m. A private burial will be held in the Salem Green Cemetery.

To share a memory or story with the family, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Lebanon

Roger D. Chicoine



Roger D. Chicoine of Lebanon passed away on Tuesday, Nov. 10. He was 90 years old. Born in Saco, Maine, on Aug. 22, 1936, he was the son of Raymond and Annette Chicoine. After graduating from Thornton Academy, he moved to Hartford, where he attended Hartford Accounting College and received his degree in accounting.

Roger proudly served his country in the United States Army Reserves from 1959-65. He married Rose Marie (Poulin) the love of his life in 1962. They quickly started their family and built their first home in Tolland before settling in East Hartford where they raised their family.

Roger was a banking executive for over 40 years with CBT, Fleet, and ultimately Bank of

See Obituaries, page 30

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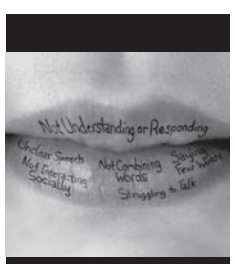
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RE11-6-26



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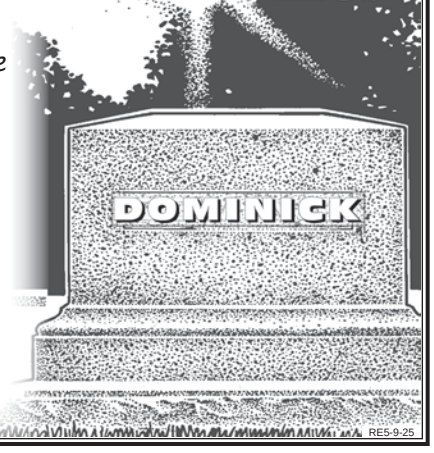
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RE5-9-25





Obituaries cont.

America and navigated through all the banking consolidation of that era. He was an active member of the "CBT Club" and the star pitcher for the bank's fastpitch softball team. He also was an active bowler for the bank team, which was where he first met Rose Marie. After his son Ronnie was diagnosed with MD, he became involved in the Muscular Dystrophy Association for many years, actively supporting the annual Labor Day Jerry Lewis Telethon and ultimately served as the MDA Connecticut Chapter President.

Roger had a lifelong passion for sports, especially baseball, and his love of the game extended well beyond watching it. He served as president of the East Hartford Pony League for a number of years. His enthusiasm led to a second "career" as an umpire, officiating more than 1,000 games in American Legion, High School, Pony, and Colt leagues until the age of 80! He took great pride in being part of the game and sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm with players and fans alike. College football and horse racing also brought him countless hours of enjoyment.

In retirement, Roger enjoyed "snowbirding," spending over 30 winters in Port Charlotte, Fla., and continuing to spend summers at the family cottage at Amston Lake. He loved traveling and visited 49 of the 50 states. Spending time with family, especially his grandchildren, brought him particular joy, and he always claimed to be "young at heart."

Roger will be dearly missed and lovingly remembered by his wife of 64 years, Rose Marie, and his children: Renee (Ronald) Rix of Amston, Raymond (Amy) Chicoine of Mission Viejo, Calif., and Rebecca Chicoine of Santa Cruz, Calif. He will also be fondly remembered by his grandchildren, Nathaniel, Olivia, Alexandra, Matthew, and Ryan; his great-grandchildren, Everett, and Reign; and numerous extended family members and friends. In addition to his parents, Roger was predeceased by two children, Rochelle Chicoine and Ronald Chicoine, and his brother, Norman Chicoine.

A funeral Mass will be held at St. Andrew Catholic Church in Colchester on Monday, Nov. 16, at 11 a.m. A private burial will take place at St. Mary's Cemetery in East Hartford.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

Arrangements have been entrusted to the Aurora McCarthy Funeral Home. To share a memory or story with the family, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



***Taking the Plunge*….Here are some more photos from East Hampton's recent Turkey Plunge!**

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PUNS HEAD!

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LEGALS

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

The East Hampton Town Council will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, November 24, 2026 at 6:30pm during the Regular Town Council Meeting in the East Hampton Town Hall, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, CT 06424. The Town Council will consider the creation of Chapter 255 of the Code of the Town of East Hampton regarding a Right to Farm Ordinance.
A copy of the draft ordinance is available in the Town Clerk's Office.

EAST HAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL
Dean Markham, Chairman
Jack Solomon, Vice Chairperson
Timothy Feegel
Ted Hintz, Jr.
Richard Knotek
Joelyn Leon
Karen Wanat

1TB 11/13

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF HEBRON
BOARD OF FINANCE
HYBRID PUBLIC FORUM

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2026 7:00 P.M. The Hebron Board of Finance will conduct a Public Information Session on the process and initial discussion of the 2027-2028 fiscal year budget on Tuesday, December 1, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in the Douglas Library of Hebron Community Room, 22 Main Street, Hebron.
A virtual option is also available at the following link: BOF PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION AND BUDGET MEETING December 1, 2026, 7:00 PM (America/New York) Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
GoTo Meeting: https://meet.goto.com/644931733. You can also dial in using your phone, +1 (571) 317-3112. Access Code 644-931-733
Residents are encouraged to attend this public meeting and express their opinions and questions on the 2027-2028 budget process. This is the first opportunity for residents to get involved in the town budget process. Comments regarding the proposed budget can also be emailed to hebronbudget@hebronct.com.

3TB 11/13, 11/20, 11/27

LEGALS

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

The East Hampton Town Council will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, November 24, 2026 at 6:30pm during the Regular Town Council Meeting in the East Hampton Town Hall, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, CT 06424. The Town Council will consider amendments to Chapter 146 of the Code of the Town of East Hampton regarding the Water and Sewer Authority.
A copy of the draft ordinance is available in the Town Clerk's Office.

EAST HAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL
Dean Markham, Chairman
Jack Solomon, Vice Chairperson
Timothy Feegel
Ted Hintz, Jr.
Richard Knotek
Joelyn Leon
Karen Wanat

1TB 11/13

TOWN OF MARLBOROUGH
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN MEETING
LEGAL NOTICE
TUESDAY, November 17, 2026
6:30 P.M.
Town Hall

The legal voters of the Town of Marlborough and eligible Property Owners with a Property Assessment of $1,000 or more are hereby notified and warned that a duly called Town Meeting will be held at the Town Hall, 26 North Main Street, on Tuesday, November 17, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. with check-in opening at 6:00 p.m. for the following purpose:
To consider approval and act upon the use of funds from the Undesignated Fund:
• Not to exceed $192,826.50 for the purchase of a Tiger BB-18 Roadside Mower
Dated at Marlborough, Connecticut this 20th day of October 2026
Board of Selectmen
Susan McFarland, Chair

2TB 11/6, 11/13

Town of Portland

Legal notice is hereby given to the water and/or sewer usage customers of the Town of Portland that quarterly bills are due and payable October 20, 2026. Payments not made in full on or before November 20, 2026 will be subject to interest of 1.5% per month from the due date.
Failure to receive a bill does not invalidate the charge or the statutorily required interest when a payment is late. Please contact the Water/Sewer department if you do not receive your bill at (860) 342-6735 or by email darce@portlandct.org
Payments are accepted in person at the Town Hall, 33 East Main Street, Portland. Payments can also be placed in the dropbox or mailed to the address listed below.
Town of Portland
Water/Sewer Dept.
P.O. Box 71
Portland, CT 06480-0071
Michele Nuhn, CCMC, CCMO
Town of Portland
Collector of Revenue

1TB 10/9, 10/23, 11/13

TOWN OF COLCHESTER
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
LEGAL NOTICE OF DECISION

At its Regular Meeting of November 4, 2026, the Colchester Planning & Zoning Commission made the following decision (s): **PZC2026-016 Anthony Skut (Applicant/Owner)** Application for a 2-lot re-subdivision on Cabin Road (MBL 03-11-012-000). Zoning District: Suburban Use (SU). **APPROVED, with conditions.**
Planning & Zoning Commission
Joseph Mathieu, Chair

1TB 11/13

TOWN OF PORTLAND
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
LEGAL NOTICE OF DECISION

At the November 4, 2026 meeting, the following actions were taken:
Approved with conditions Application #26-04: 246 Main Street. Request for a Site Plan Review for proposal to convert existing restaurant space on first floor to office space. Application of Jennifer Dagle and property of WDW Properties LLC. Map 28, Lot 42. Zone B-3.
Dated at Portland, CT this 9th day of November 2026
Robert Ellsworth, Chairman
Planning & Zoning Commission

1TB 11/13

TOWN OF PORTLAND
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Portland Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, November 19, 2026 at a meeting to start at 7:00 p.m. in the Buck Foreman Room (2nd Floor), 265 Main Street, Portland, CT.
Application #26-02: 95 Culver Lane. Request for variance from Zoning Regulation Table 4.2.1 from the side yard setback to allow construction of a shed with a setback of 1 ft where 25 ft is required. Application and property of Sade Holley and Angel Solis. Assessor's Map 42, Lot 24. Zone RR.
At this hearing interested persons may appear and be heard and written communications will be received. A copy of this application is available for public review in the Portland Land Use Department.
Dated at Portland, CT this 2nd day of November 2026.
Kurt Peterson, Chairman

2TB 11/6, 11/13

LEGAL NOTICE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
HEBRON, CONNECTICUT

The Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing at a meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 18, 2026 at 7:00 P.M., to be held virtually through the GoToMeeting Platform, on the following:
Petition 2026-11: Petition from Michelle Nicholson for Special Permit for the sale of open alcoholic beverages at the Flour Girl Café at 14-16 Main Street in accordance with Section 5.O.1 of the Hebron Zoning Regulations, Hebron Green District.
Planning and Zoning Commission
Nov 18, 2026, 7:00 – 9:30 PM (America/New_York)
Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
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You can also dial in using your phone.
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Dated at Hebron, Connecticut, this 3rd day of November 2026.
Frank Zitkus, Chair

2TB 11/6, 11/13

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RE11-13-26

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For our group home positions we have Monday-Sunday open second and third shift which is 3pm-11pm and 11pm-7am. These positions are in Colchester.

If you are interested in becoming a part of our team, please feel free to call us and ask for more information at 860-531-9426

RE3-15-24

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We also offer a comprehensive benefit package including paid vacation, holidays, employer funded HRA, medical and dental insurance, and generous matching 401K plan.

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RE9-25-26

TOWN OF ANDOVER CT

VACANCY - MAINTAINER II

The Town of Andover is seeking applications for a full time Public Works Maintainer II. Starting salary is $31.29 per hour. This is a Union Position included in the Local 1303-368 of Connecticut Council #4, AFSCIME, AFL-CIO and subject to all conditions. CDL license is mandatory. The job description and application for this position are available at www.andoverct.org.

To apply, send a completed application to the Office of the Town Administrator, Town Hall, 17 School Rd, Andover, CT 06232, Or email it to adminassistant@andoverct.org This posting will remain open until the position has been filled. EOE M/F

RE10-30-26

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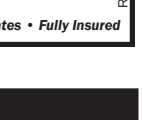
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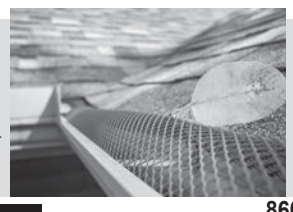
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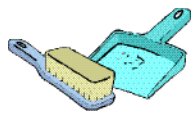


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